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Teaching Jobs Overseas / JOYJOBS.COM

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Why overseas

Be in Control

“Confidence is preparation. Everything else is beyond our control.”—Richard Klink



I want to teach overseas because I am interested in:

- 🎬 Cultural enrichment
- 🎬 Professional growth
- 🎬 Money, financial security
- 🎬 New relationships
- 🎬 Revitalizing my life (feeling burned out, bored)
- 🎬 Special interests (spiritual search, adoption, art, cuisine)
- 🎬 Health concerns (lose weight, kick bad habits)

Usually we can't select one single aspect as the sole reason to go overseas.

In most cases people have more or less most of these reasons. Your goals will also change over time. For example, a friend of ours went to Greece out of curiosity. He soon discovered great career and financial opportunities; and after a few years in Greece moved to Saudi Arabia. His house in Florida is vacant most of the year.

Another friend started out as a teacher in a small town in Ontario, Canada, with little or no opportunities for growth. After a few years of highly successful overseas experience she is now director of a big international school with an amazing range of opportunities. Her Facebook page indicates 52 countries that she has visited!

Handling Changes

A person who went abroad in search of independence and financial security may get married and focus on her family as a result. Those who went overseas primarily pursuing exotic travel experiences often change their priorities as soon as the initial desire for experience is satisfied. A lot of people are highly successful professionally.

Prepare for Cultural Diversity

“I remember being terrified by the very upper–class parents of a darling British girl I was teaching. These parents turned out to be wonderfully supportive of my program and appreciated more than anything the fact that their daughter adored coming to school.” —Teacher

Most international schools hire teachers of various backgrounds. You will most likely be working with teachers from Europe, North and Latin America, many Asian and African countries, not to mention the teachers of the host country.

Your manner of teaching may be very different from what parents are accustomed to.

“Happy children make happy parents! I spent an unforgettable Christmas day at their gorgeous home in the hills of Sofia. In one week I was invited to dinner three times. The first was to an East Indian family, where the children dictated the evening, the second to an American diplomat's home where the children were not seen because they were upstairs with the nanny and the third to a British couple's house where the children were integrated into the evening's events.” —Teacher

Professional Realm

Overseas schools are great places for the dedicated educator. Classes are small, so you have the ability to give each student individual attention. Many students come from the families of diplomats; most of them have lived in several countries and speak more than one language.

A lot of parents come from wealthier classes, with an above average level of education. Consequently, their expectations are high and most of them become involved with the life at the school. You will learn a lot from your students, maybe even more than they will learn from you!

“Each child brings a different set of values and orientations. Many have lived in many different countries and speak several languages. Their parents work in international companies or have diplomatic positions and set high academic standards for their children. These students tend to be high-motivated and well-disciplined.” —Ann Bradley

To sum it up, look for an international school that offers:

- 🎬 Creative teaching environment
- 🎬 Motivated students
- 🎬 Educated parents who care
- 🎬 Small class sizes
- 🎬 Superb educational environment
- 🎬 Full administrative support
- 🎬 Close warm relationships with colleagues, parents, the expat community in general
- 🎬 Ability to employ your program
- 🎬 Participation in international education events held in major world capitals
- 🎬 Building a network around the world that you can use to secure employment in the future
- 🎬 Integration in the overseas teaching and expat community

Rich cultural environments bring learning to life.

“As a social studies and language arts teacher I used my surroundings as a source of lesson planning. While studying the Roman Empire, we read Julius Caesar and visited a town with the ruins of a Roman amphitheater and forum. While studying Japan, a Japanese student taught the class a lesson on the Japanese tea ceremony.” —Anne Bradley

Social Realm

Essentially, the social realm boils down to: Discovering a whole new social layer of people such as diplomats, businessmen, bankers, journalists, etc.

Meeting new people of different cultures and backgrounds including expats.

For singles – an abundance of easy ways to start new relationships with a variety of people, both from your country and foreign nationals.

For couples – many new fashions to revitalize relationships through new experiences. For couples with children, a variety of ways to broaden your children's education by exposing them to new cultures, languages, customs and traditions.

Personal Realm

Again, you will have a unique experience but this is what you should expect:

- 🎬 Meeting unusual people
- 🎬 Learning foreign cultures
- 🎬 Exploring world history on site
- 🎬 Sightseeing famous places
- 🎬 Understanding new customs and traditions
- 🎬 Looking into new foods and wines, indulging your gastronomic urges
- 🎬 Bargain hunting, shopping
- 🎬 Visiting world famous museums, exploring cultural heritage

Self Esteem Boost

Integration into a new environment, meeting new people and coping with inevitable challenges will increase your self-esteem. You feel a much more capable person, strong and independent. You are confident with everybody, as your overseas experience has taught you to never put anyone above your own shoulders.

“One reason why teachers teach overseas is often overlooked, however, because it has nothing to do directly with the new environment. But many teachers have found that on their return, they have

acquired a new perspective on themselves and on the country from which they came, and that they understand and relate to people and issues that before did not seem relevant. This in turn has the potential to open up new opportunities for personal growth. There are many stories of teachers who have branched out in new directions on their return from an overseas assignment.” —Teacher

We, for example, felt so overwhelmed with impressions and ideas that writing a book and making a Joyjobs website was the most natural thing to do. Neither of us had thought about it before.

Start Your Life Anew!

Oh, that feeling of a fresh wind in your sails! Because nobody knows anything about your past you are free to define yourself to your new community in any way you want. If you feel like there are things you should leave behind in your life, going overseas is an easy way to accomplish this transition.

Relationships and Marriage

In many parts of the world, the globalization process created a new sense of cultural awareness. People do not want to be assimilated into a homogeneous world of consumption. This includes the ways men and women interact with each other. Online dating services can't possibly replace real communication. It is no wonder that many people get married overseas. We have worked with many multinational families with parents of every possible combination (e.g. France – New Zealand, Syria – USA, Germany – England, Japan – UK, etc. etc.) while their children attended the same international school.

Financial Realm

People who never lived overseas always compare incomes in monetary value. “What is my salary?” is perhaps the most frequent question. Because of the benefits, favorable tax policies and other advantages, such as free transportation, housing, utilities, etc. you are actually making up to 30–50 percent more than the same salary at home. To go home would mean a return to a more modest lifestyle.

Teaching salaries may range from a low of \$20,000 to a high of \$110,000 annually. Administrative salaries may range from \$35,000 to over \$175,000 annually. The cost of living in the host country, the size of the school, and the

isolation of the location are among factors affecting salaries.

The Time Perspective

Most beginners focus exclusively on the immediate goal of getting a job, as soon as possible. It pays, however, to look at your situation in a long-term perspective.

– What do I want to be in 2–3–5 years?

Setting goals gives you a sense of purpose. It is important, especially at the first step when the initial culture shock can be quite painful. A vision of where you are heading to helps a lot!

Culture shock

For many people, the culture shock starts with a simple discovery that many countries have superior transportation systems, more efficient customer services, better communications, great food, friendly people, and low crime. When we lived in Japan we discovered that there was no crime news on TV.

Make friends. People are usually friendly and supportive once you get to know each other a little better. This is the best remedy as far as culture shock is concerned.

Don't go overseas on a short-term contract

It takes time to get adjusted. If you want to enjoy your time abroad – stay in a foreign country at least two years. You will understand these advantages later; just trust us for now.

Don't go overseas on a political or religious agenda

For a teacher, it is unprofessional. Preaching religion is going to get you in hot water very quickly. Share your beliefs by a personal example, not lecturing.

**“Example is not the main thing that influences others. It is the only thing.”
—Albert Schweitzer**

Avoid arrogance

According to Robert Barlas of Search Associates, this is the best advice of all.

Appreciate differences

A friend came back from Slovakia with a conclusion that "They do not know how to do business. There are 2 shops next to each other, one sells coffee and other pastries. Why can't the coffee shop sell pastries?"

The answer is that the coffee shop owner and the pastry maker have families who have lived side by side for many generations, through wars, political upheavals and other turmoils. Driving each other out of business in pursuit of profit is not their motivation. Instead of teaching them how to antagonize one another, learn from them how to sustain a livable community.

By being perceptive and courteous you will gain an immediate respect from your community and your attitude will distinguish you in a positive way from those who criticize. When you see something that makes no sense to you – do not assume that you and your country are superior because you do it differently. Life is generally more complex than what lies on the surface.

Substantial cultural differences exist. What is cool in your culture may be very uncool in a foreign culture. Do not take your own ways for granted.

Surprisingly, what you may dislike initially often becomes the favorite part of your whole foreign experience. For example, some people view a carless lifestyle as a disadvantage. However, it is often the most liberating experience of your life. Using cash instead of plastic may be inconvenient until you discover the advantages of debt-free living and personal privacy. The examples can go on and on...

– OK, I am ready to start my search. How do I begin?

You will find the answers in the following chapters... We have left no stone unturned... The best way to get in the cutting edge of international recruiting is to simply read this program, from front to back. It is not rocket science; in fact, it is very "do-able".

Now that you know where we are going, let the journey begin!

Next: Know Thy Employers

Know Thy Employers

Get the facts!



“The world is filled with willing people; some willing to work, the rest willing to let them.” —Robert Frost

Surprisingly, even experienced overseas teachers do not always know of all the opportunities they have. Many candidates start their job search in the same manner as if they were looking for a travel package – selecting a destination country. First of all it is essential to have a clear idea what kinds of jobs and employers are available to you. We receive many inquiries on teaching overseas. Many people believe that teaching abroad equals teaching English to foreign nationals. This is not so.

Teachers of all subject areas and all age levels are hired. There are also jobs for school administrators, librarians, speech therapists, guidance counselors, and so on.

This Guide is written from the North-American perspective; however, it is applicable for teachers of other nationalities: British, Australian and others.

According to ISC Research, a British company that focuses on international school education, there are currently 6,400 international schools in the world — up 153 percent from 12 years ago — that employ 300,000 full-time teaching staff members. It is a secure and growing market; you can rely on it for years to come.

ISC estimates that by 2022, the number of international schools will jump to more than 11,000 and will employ 529,000. That is half a million international educators! There is certainly a place for you, too.

The employers we include here represent the majority of international teaching opportunities. However, it is impossible to list every potential employer. So do not be surprised if you see a job ad at our message board posted by a non-listed employer. Naturally, not all options are available to all teachers. On the other

hand, many teachers will find opportunities across the board. Because of the extreme diversity of the subject matter, some employers are hard to classify and will not fall under any category. There are many factors to consider, for example:

- Who owns the school? (parents, shareholders, individuals, government)
- What is its legal status? (for-profit, non-profit, private, charity, proprietary)
- What type of curriculum does it have? (IBO, UK, North American, Ontario, IPC)
- What are the professional requirements? (age limits, nationalities, degrees, certification)
- How are the faculty recruited? (job fairs / Skype/ third-party recruiters)

All these questions are important. As you can see there is no host country in this list. International schools are classified by their type, not country.

Do not put the carriage before the horse

Lots of beginners make the same mistake: identifying a country prior to the school type. We call it the Travel Agency (TA) approach. For example:

“I graduated with a Masters in creative writing from Hollins University this May and would like to teach in Italy.”

Now, what is wrong with that? After all, isn't travel one of the reasons why people teach overseas? Yes, absolutely. Nevertheless, do not forget that teaching overseas starts with TEACHING. "Overseas" comes second! Since good jobs are always in short supply and the market is fairly small you need to focus on the TEACHING part. Go after a job, not a country!

Consider the following situation:

There are only a few international schools in every country so the number of vacancies is limited, too. For example, on a given month you qualify for the following number of openings in these countries, say Middle School Social Studies:

2 in Greece, 8 in Turkey, 2 in Italy, 2 in Thailand, 5 in Japan, 1 in Jamaica, 8 in Spain, 22 in China , 7 in Indonesia, 2 in Poland, 1 in Belgium, 4 in Switzerland , 7 in Hong Kong , 3 in Argentina, 3 in Venezuela , 8 in Germany , 1 in France , 5 in Kuwait, 8 in Saudi Arabia, 6 in Bahrain, 13 in Egypt, 2 in Tunisia, 3 in Russia, 2 in Romania, 5 in Brazil, 2 in Costa Rica, 1 in Papua New Guinea, 2 in Bulgaria, 6 in Malaysia , 25 – in other countries.

All in all, about 160 possible options.

Now, supposing you target only Italy. How many shots would you have left? Exactly, only 2!

Think about it! By using the TA approach, you reduced your chances from 160 to 2!

By considering all options, you increase your chances 80-fold. Moreover, since most new North American candidates choose either Spain or Italy, your real chances may be even worse than 2! Sometimes, they are close to zero — simply from the statistical viewpoint.

What is the alternative to the TA approach?

Great question! Every country has several different types of schools. And you only qualify for a few types, but not all of them! For example, if you are a certified K-12 music teacher from Alabama you are not eligible for the Italian public schools simply because of your passport: the schools require a European Union citizenship to begin with, not to mention the EU teacher certification.

But you would be eligible for the US Department of Defense Schools (DoDEA) that has military bases in Livorno and Naples. You can also be hired by the American international schools in Italy.

Target your school type, not your favorite country.

It is important to remember that all contacts are temporary. Putting all your energy into landing a job in a particular location is hardly a productive idea. Once your contact is over you have to move on anyway. Include your favorite places in your search but follow a global approach to recruitment.

All of them have different professional and visa requirements, application procedures, and recruitment schedules. Your contract including compensation package, tax status, bonuses and everything else will largely depend on the school's type and legal status rather than its geographic location.

Schools are grouped by their types, rather than countries. For example, The American School of Rome has more in common with *The American School of Beijing* — than with the *Scuola Media Statale L. Settembrini* in Rome.

Likewise, *The Bavarian International School in Germany* is more similar to *The Nagoya International School (Japan)* – than to the *Astrid-Lindgren Grundschule* in Berlin, and so on. Target schools, not countries!

Who are my employers?






All teaching jobs can be roughly divided into two major groups:

International Schools

Language Schools

Although almost every international school has a EFL/ESL program and some language schools resemble “regular” international schools you must keep in mind this division.

The following large groups represent the majority of employers:

-  Mainstream K-12 International Schools: American, British, Canadian, French, German, Swiss, etc.
-  US Department of Defense, DODEA
-  UK Ministry of Defense, MOD
-  Company-owned schools: Shell Schools, ARAMCO, etc.
-  Regional school groups: QSI, GEMS, SABIS, British Council, Nord Anglia, etc.

- 🎓 Church-affiliated schools, primarily Christian
- 🎓 Private ESL/EFL schools and academies
- 🎓 International sections and exchange programs within foreign schools, colleges and universities
- 🎓 Government-sponsored educational projects, e.g. Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools in Kazakhstan.

The Mainstream K-12 International Schools

You should consider these schools first. The majority of them are British and American. There are a few Australian, New Zealander, Canadian, French, German, Swiss and other schools. Started as schools to serve western families working abroad, many now serve students from many other countries as well.

Do not confuse them with the local proprietary schools that often incorporate *American* or *British* in their names.

American and British international schools are usually independent, non-governmental, nondenominational, non-profit educational entities.

Varying governance structures can be found, but most of them are privately governed by boards. These boards are usually made up of parents and embassy representatives.

Because these schools are non-profits, salaries and benefits are usually better and the overall environment is less thrift conscious compared to the for-profit commercial private schools. Most educators are on two or three year renewable contracts.

Some schools limit the number of years a teacher can be employed at the same school. In other cases, teachers leave to escape taxation (some countries impose a social security tax after 2 years of employment). Hiring requirements, salaries, and benefits vary considerably with many offering free housing, vehicle, tax exemptions and tuition savings for dependent children, R&R trips, and bonuses upon completion of contracts.

From our experience, the schools in the developing countries are more supportive and offer better packages than those in Europe due to a lower cost of living. Americans employed abroad are generally entitled to a \$100,000 exclusion of taxable income under certain defined conditions. This allows schools to advertise themselves as *tax-free*.

However, local taxes are often due. Tax issues depend on various circumstances such as your country of origin, the country of employment, length of stay, specific tax agreements between your countries and other details.

The cost of living index

The US government compiles a cost of living index which can be quite misleading if you do not understand its methodology: that is, using US goods and services as the basis for comparison. When we lived in Bulgaria, for example, everything imported from America was sold at a huge premium. If you choose to buy US-imported goods and comparable services — your expenses would be much higher than in the United States. As the result of this nonsense, Bulgaria was listed as a more expensive place to live than Washington D.C.!

The US Department of State uses it to calculate the "hardship" allowances that it pays to its servicemen, there is no other justification for this absurdity. For teachers and other non-government employees this "index" is useless because most people adjust their lifestyle according to what the host country has to offer — with great benefit to them. Here is a current example:

“Although the cost of living in Caracas is about 15% higher than the US, most expatriate teachers find that they are able to travel quite a bit and still save at least \$12,000 per year from a single salary. (The international School of Caracas, Venezuela)”

In addition, the country index is not the same as the city index. Big cities tend to be more expensive regardless of the country, as they focus on the wealthiest and most dynamic groups of the population.

Most American schools were established to educate the children of the US and British diplomats who live abroad. Students in these schools are children of diplomats and business people, and are a mix of American, British, host-country nationals, and nationals from other countries. There are about 200 schools of this type.

When we taught in Bulgaria, the typical parents would be representatives of the major US companies such as PepsiCo, Coca Cola, Johnson and Johnson, Ford; officers of the World Bank and other international organizations, as well as the whole array of diplomats — not only from the US and Britain but also from Austria, Turkey, Germany, Croatia, New Zealand, India, etc.

Some of these schools receive financial assistance from the US Department of State because they enroll children of US government employees, but they are formally independent of the US government. However, the influence of the US or British embassy can be substantial. Because many parents are the embassy officers, they will also dominate the school board.

Note that the tuition fees are quite high, but only local students actually pay the fees out of pocket. US government employees stationed abroad receive *education allowances* that cover these expenses.

The corporate transfers who send their children to American private schools also receive education allowances paid by their companies.

Because the education allowances come from the US government, most American international schools maintain close relationships with US Embassies although they are formally independent.

Typically, the US or British Ambassadors have the right to nominate several members of the board who, in turn, will make sure that the school policies comply with the Embassy's guidelines. This arrangement can have both positive and negative consequences. The positive part is that any illegal manipulations with teachers and their contracts are impossible, as is sometimes the case with proprietary schools that operate outside the US/UK/Canadian jurisdiction and board supervision. On the negative side, there may be more influences coming from different sources that are not always beneficial.

Luckily, because of the high turnover of the staff most conflicts are resolved fairly quickly.

Most American International schools also recruit Brits and teachers of other nationalities while British International schools tend to limit their recruitment to the UK-qualified educators (QTS).

Accreditation

The majority of these schools are *accredited* and this is good news for you. Accreditation by an independent international agency is a way to ensure professional and academic consistency from one school to another, regardless of the country.

Most independent international schools strive to be accredited. The purpose of accreditation is to assure the parents of the school's overall quality and compliance of its academic program with the international standards. Diplomats and business people often move from one country to another. They require that various international schools have the same educational standards — regardless of the location. Accreditation ensures that the school adheres to these requirements.

Many schools are accredited by several independent organizations. This is done to comply with the needs of various groups of students. For example, the school that employs North American educators and uses a North American curriculum will want to be accredited by a US agency, such as *New England Association of Schools and Colleges*. If the school also has a large proportion of European and British students it will most likely to pursue the CIS accreditation as well, to make sure that the British National Curriculum is properly implemented.

Because the schools pay so much attention to the accreditation it's also a great benchmark for the candidates. You do not want to work in a school that does not meet the international standards or does not care about its reputation.

Accreditation means that the school:

- has been evaluated by a team of experienced professionals o meets academic and professional standards o is subject to regular visits by external agencies;
- has undergone a rigorous self-assessment Accreditation is granted for a few years and must be renewed.

Sometimes a school loses accreditation – this is a very big red flag! You should always check a school's accreditation status. It does not guarantee that

everything is fine, but the risk is a lot lower when the school is officially accredited.

There are some proprietary schools that have such a high reputation they do not bother to apply for any kind of accreditation. Their own name is a guarantee of quality. These schools are rare, primarily in Switzerland and some other European countries.



The IB Invasion

Internationally, the most common curriculum is the IB, administered by the *International Baccalaureate Organization*, based in Geneva, Switzerland (and its processing centers located all over the world.)

The IB offers a sequence of three *programmes* — the Primary Years Programme (PYP), the Middle Years Programme (MYP) and the Diploma Programme (DP). The newest offering from the IB is the IB Career-related Certificate (IBCC), for students aged 16 to 19.

The IB is increasingly popular with international schools worldwide. Both American and British international schools tend to abandon their national-based curricula in favor of the IB. Teachers with the IB training and experience are the most sought after. Once you start teaching internationally, you are very likely to be offered IB workshops / certification courses through your school. The IB credential works like a global visa: you have a lot more flexibility in terms of your job locations.

Regional Organizations

There are many regional professional associations that unite the majority of established international schools, for example:

- 🎬 **The International Schools Association, Geneva**
- 🎬 **The National Association of British Schools in Spain**
- 🎬 **Central and Eastern European Schools Association (CEESA)**
- 🎬 **Near East South Asia Council of Overseas Schools (NESA)**

When you start teaching overseas, you are most likely to participate in one of the regional teacher conferences organized by these associations. During our years in Bulgaria the CEESA teacher conferences took us to Warsaw (Poland), Budapest (Hungary), Prague (Czech Republic), Bucharest (Romania) and Moscow (Russia). It was yet another opportunity to explore the world, paid for by the school, as part of your contract.

Parents

The parent's expectations are high. Although there are all kinds of situations, prepare for a competitive environment. The parents can and will put pressure on the school director if there is a problem with your performance in the classroom or in your private life! The parents talk to their kids and know what is going on in the school. School is taken seriously. Because children will be coming from ladder-climbing families of diplomats and business executives, they will want the best for their children. Be prepared.

Of course, due to staff turnover and general fluidity of the market the actual situation differs from school to school and year to year. A departure of an active board member or director can let the school slide into tranquility.

A third grade teacher we worked with, really a fine educator, was hounded mercilessly from the first week by the wife of American diplomat. Luckily, we had a supportive administration; we formed an informal teacher's union and finally wrote a letter asking the American ambassador to intervene. It was an unpleasant experience for the entire school and cast a shadow over our year.

“One year I had the children of four ambassadors in my class! ” —Pamela

Campbell

As is the case with International Schools, most American private schools need the financial support from non-English speaking students to keep afloat. The actual proportion of foreign students varies from school to school but it's almost a universal practice to have some fraction of the student body comprised of foreign nationals. The main reason the school enrolls non- American students is the money coming from their tuition fees.

Some countries prohibit international schools from enrolling host-country nationals. For example, when we taught in Japan, our school's population included a lot of Korean students, rather than Japanese. There were few exceptions for special needs kids that could not sustain the rigor of the Japanese public school system.

School admission policies may become a major debate at the board and staff meetings. Another year in Bulgaria, we had 8 non-English speaking students out of 17 in one class and the British ambassador was up at arms about school admission policies — demanding to expel non-English speaking students to preserve the “purity” of the school.

Many international schools have a very tight integration with the local expatriate community and national culture. This integration is reflected in their names incorporating the word International, such as the *French-American International School*. It may sound strange at first but it makes sense.

Advantages: stable, rewarding jobs offering good salaries paid in US\$ or Pound Sterling (sometimes a portion is paid in local currency) excellent travel opportunities, creative environment, and motivated students. Round trip airfare, bonuses and other perks. Free tuition/airfare for dependent children. Shipping allowances for your stuff.

Remember that the total benefits package is a lot more than just the salary. Most international schools provide such common benefits as free housing or a stipend to cover housing. International flights, baggage allowances, waved tuition fees (for dependents), health cover, professional development money, etc. etc. In fact, such benefits are exactly the same as money in your pocket. In this regard, there are very few, if any, public school districts in the U.S. that come close to the total tangible benefits package one receives as an international teacher.

Disadvantages: recruiters are meticulous, especially in Europe; many schools require over 3 years

teaching experience. IB training is often required (an advantage for those who have it!); the British schools are reluctant to hire teachers from North America. Some schools have poor compensation packages and suffer from organizational problems. Many European schools do not provide housing.

Eligibility: Applicants need two or more years of relevant teaching experience. Typically, over 85% of those who sign contracts have two or more years of experience. Both US and Canadian credentials are valid. Many schools also recruit teachers from New Zealand, Australia and other countries. Singles with no dependents and certified married teaching couples are preferred. Typically, over 90% of the successful candidates are in one of these categories.

Locations: over 100 countries.

Recruiting: direct (online/ Skype); international recruiting fairs, agencies.

Chances of finding work: good, provided you meet the requirements, start early and apply on a global basis.

Here are a few schools of this type:

- 🎬 American Community Schools Athens, Greece
- 🎬 International School of Estonia
- 🎬 Maputo International School, Mozambique
- 🎬 Canadian International School of Hong Kong
- 🎬 British School of Valencia, Spain
- 🎬 Australian International School, Indonesia
- 🎬 American School of Paris, France

Compensation, samples:

Canadian International School of Hong Kong

- The initial contract period for teachers is two years
- Annual teacher's salary HK\$644,245 to HK\$898,304 (*US\$83,128 to US\$115,911)
- Basic Salary pay scale ranges from HK\$466,871 to HK\$678,587 per year
- A gratuity payment equal to 20% of the Basic Salary at the end of each contract period
- In addition, a cash allowance of HK\$7,000 is paid monthly
- Group medical insurance for teachers and their families
- Group life insurance for teachers
- 80% tuition fee subsidy for up to two staff children
- Free school bus transportation

The American School of Japan

Contracts

Initial contracts are for three years. After the initial contract, it is possible for a teacher to terminate employment at the end of any school year without prejudice, provided that proper notice is given.

Starting Salary

The starting base salary for new teachers is ¥6,672,000 or US\$70,232 at the current exchange rate of ¥95 = US\$1 and is highly competitive among international schools. We have 21 steps on our three-band salary scale. All compensation is paid in Japanese Yen, but any amount can be converted into US Dollars or many other currencies with little difficulty.

Allowances

An annual Housing Allowance of ¥1,730,000 to ¥2,804,000 is paid depending on family size and marital status. A one-time Relocation Allowance of ¥400,000

is paid upon arrival. Both allowances are on a one-per-family basis.

Transportation & Baggage

Initial travel is provided for a foreign-hire teacher and accompanying dependents from home-of-record to Tokyo. Beginning in the second year, for each year of employment a travel allowance between Tokyo and home-of record is provided to foreign-hire teachers, their spouses and up to two children who reside with them in Japan.

Shipment of household goods by land and sea (not air) is provided for foreign-hire teachers at the beginning of employment in the amount of 1,000 pounds per full-time teacher, 750 pounds for a non-teaching spouse and 250 pounds for up to two children who will reside with the teacher in Japan. Upon termination of employment these weights are increased based upon the number of years of service. Packing and unpacking service costs are also borne by the school.

Medical Benefits

Hospital and major medical coverage is provided as of August 1 with all premiums paid by the school. The policy has a \$1,600 deductible. New teachers should maintain their own coverage through July 31 of the year in which they start employment at ASIJ. Dental coverage is also available with the cost of premiums shared equally by the school and the teacher.

Long-term disability insurance is also provided by the school. Life and personal liability insurance policies are arranged for purchase at a reasonable cost.

Retirement

The school provides a retirement plan and contributes 8% of base salary in each of the first three years, 10% in years 4-7 and 13% thereafter. The school does not participate in US or Japanese social security. The retirement age at ASIJ is 65 years old.

Housing Assistance

In addition to the Housing Allowance above, the school provides assistance in locating and contracting housing near the school. Apartments or houses are small

by American standards. A mix of Japanese and Western style rooms are common.

Leave

Sick Leave (10 days/year, may accumulate up to a max. of 60 days)

Professional Development Leave

Personal Leave (2 days, may accumulate up to a max. of 5 days)

Leave of Absence / Maternity Leave / Terminal Illness / Bereavement Leave



Our apartment in Japan was a mix of western and Japanese elements: sliding doors, tatami, shōji (translucent paper), bamboo chairs and leather couches.

Corporate/Foundation Schools

There are three basic varieties of these schools:

1. Schools run by large companies to serve the education needs of their employees. These kinds of schools are usually associated with an oil company, for example, Saudi Aramco.

Teachers are hired through their recruitment and personnel departments. Others use independent recruiters, for example, Saudi Jobs. www.saudijobs.com

2. Denominational schools that provide educational services in a religion-specific context (Moslem, Catholic, Christian schools).

3. Schools run by international education organizations, such as Quality Schools International or International School Services. While company schools can be well equipped and offer additional benefits to their teachers, some Christian schools hire volunteer teachers providing them with only basic compensation.

US Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA)

The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) is a civilian agency of the U.S. Department of Defense. DoDEA presently operates approximately 200 elementary, middle, and high schools in 20 districts that are located in 13 foreign countries, seven states, Guam, Cuba, and Puerto Rico.

Obviously, the most “American” of the overseas experiences, where you would be teaching the minor dependents of active duty military and civilian personnel stationed in US and abroad. Once hired to work for DoDEA, you will be a US government employee and probably be represented by a union.

Locations: Germany, Japan, Okinawa, England, Italy, Korea, Turkey, Spain, Cuba, Netherlands, Belgium, Azores, Iceland, Bahrain, and Greece.
<http://www.dodea.edu/>

Advantages: Excellent compensation packages, free airfare, much better baggage allowance. Familiar school environment, well-equipped schools, great travel opportunities. Military bases also have a battery of non-teaching

vacancies. DoDEA hires inexperienced teachers along with experienced ones. Student-Teaching-Interning is possible in overseas DoDEA schools for university students finishing up their teacher certification program.

DoDEA is one of the few overseas school systems that does not discriminate against candidates with non-teaching spouses and dependent children. Being married or having children has absolutely no bearing on the DoDEA hiring decision.

One government-funded round trip on regularly scheduled commercial/chartered airlines per each calendar year for you and your dependents. Teachers are paid on seven different Academic Salary Lanes (ASL) which reflect degrees and graduate course work completed after each degree.

Disadvantages: Many of the chronic problems that haunt US schools at home are present in DoDEA. Essentially, you are going to teach at a typical American public school. There are no international students, no multinational faculty, no integration in the multicultural diplomatic and business community. You have to make efforts to branch out and experience what comes naturally in an international school setting. DoDEA is harder to get into than the other school types.

New hires are on probation for the first two school years and can be let go at any time during this period with no reasons given. The number of countries is limited, currently 13. You have no choice of placement. In fact, you can be sent anywhere from Guantanamo Bay, Cuba to Okinawa, Japan.

Turning down an offer because you do not like the location will almost certainly cause your application to receive no further consideration this year and you will have to totally re-apply again in the coming year.

As a DoDEA teacher you have to file an annual 1040 tax return and pay income taxes on every dollar of your salary just as if you were in the United States. However, it does not include a substantial Living Quarters Allowance nor any of your elected contributions to the retirement plan.

Recruitment. Hiring is strictly centralized. Don't bother to send employment inquiries to individual schools.

Eligibility: US citizenship; at a minimum, an accredited Bachelor's degree, and a Teaching Certificate from a U.S. State-approved college of education are required. Having two certified teaching areas for all secondary levels, 6—12, is the minimally qualified certification requirement; exceptions are made for certain Specialist positions and some hard-to-fill slots such as advanced Math and advanced Science. DoDEA issues its own teacher certificate and requires 6 accredited semester hours continuing education every six years to renew this certificate

Ministry of Defense (MOD), United Kingdom

The British schools in Belize, Brunei, Cyprus, Denmark, Falkland Islands, Gibraltar, Italy, Belgium, Holland and Germany. Similar to DoDEA.

Service Children's Education <http://www.sce-web.com>

Local International Schools

Most of the local international schools can also be called Proprietary (as they are owned and operated by a single person or a group of people) or Immersion schools (because they cater to the education needs of the local students – but the curriculum is taught in English). The idea behind these schools is to offer an alternative type of education (usually North-American or British). Due to the popularity of English, there are hundreds of private international school all over the world.

Many of these schools incorporate the words British, American, Canadian in their names but they are local entities operating under the foreign jurisdiction so don't let the names fool you.

Who owns these schools? Oftentimes they are owned and run by a single person who is usually the director or chairman. It can be a consortium or a joint venture. Some come under religious guises. For tax and other reasons the legal structure can be quite obscure. Many international schools are not clearly in any category. For example, a school where the faculty and administrators are American and British, the students are local; and the school is regulated by the local Ministry of Education. However, usually such schools are simply a product of an entrepreneurial initiative.

There has always been a demand for Western-style education. The curriculum is often the decisive factor that determines where teachers will be hired. Schools that favor a North-American curriculum are likely to bring the faculty from the USA and Canada as well. Because of the historic ties to Great Britain, many areas of the world traditionally incline to the British type schools including the curriculum, methods of teaching and British English. You can find proprietary immersion schools in every country, big or small.

Because of the great variety of these schools, virtually every teacher can find a niche. Many proprietary and immersion schools cater to the educational needs (and tastes) of the local parents. It is a very important thing to remember when you deal with them because it will affect every little detail of your job and may affect your personal life while you are there. Every owner has his own interpretation of Western-style education. You may find some of his/her ideas dubious but there is little you can do about it. Because these schools come in all kinds of guises it is impossible to evaluate them as a single category. There are excellent schools with exceptional leadership, providing quality education but there are also many startups that do not meet the requirements of an established school.

Proprietary/immersion schools, run by a local entrepreneur or a partnership, are usually found in the prestigious areas of town. School children often wear uniforms to distinguish them from other school children. Student population is largely from the host country, making you one of the few native speakers of English at the school. Immersion schools like to say they hire only certified teachers for credibility, however, all kinds of teachers are hired – these schools are an excellent opportunity for new teachers.

Advantages: lower requirements, easy entry level, cultural diversity, motivated students (Asia), creative environment, and fascinating teaching experience.

Disadvantages: The extreme variety of this school type creates a possibility for disappointment. Local salaries are often too low.

Eligibility: Teachers of all subject areas and ages. BA, MA degrees. 2—5 years' experience preferred but many schools will hire new teachers as well. Two-year contracts are typical.

Locations: There are over 2000 international schools worldwide and the number is growing. Most popular regions: Middle East and Asia.

Other International Schools

Most world capitals also have French, Japanese, German, Korean, Russian, Chinese and other international schools, associated with their respective countries. Most of them employ English teachers as well as teachers of other languages.

Teaching English to Foreigners — ESL / EFL Opportunities

Why is TEFL so attractive? Because it offers an opportunity to almost anybody whose native language is English. Some of the employers are:

- 🎓 Public educational institutions
- 🎓 Proprietary schools and academies
- 🎓 School chains (International House, Berlitz, ICT, Wall Street English, etc.)

Proprietary language schools are foreign entities that operate under local jurisdiction. These are commercial ventures, often at the lower school and kindergarten levels. These schools are for-profit organizations and it is reflected in their daily operations, recruiting practices and every other important aspect.

Pay and benefits vary hugely from school to school. Make sure you know what your duties will be before accepting a post. The advantages of working at an academy sometimes outweigh the disadvantages.

If you do not mind the unusual working hours, it is a wonderful place to work to meet people, as surely at some point you'll have a group of students your own age or with your interests.

If you love to be in the middle of the hustle–bustle, with lots of activity around you, this may be the placement for you.

Teaching through Sponsoring Organizations

US Peace Corps

Over one-third of Peace Corps Volunteers are teachers in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Central Europe, and other parts of the world. Their subjects include math, science, English, vocational education, teacher training, special education, business education, physical education, art education, and educational testing. No special training is required.

Assignments are available all over the world. Depending on your qualifications, you might serve as a math teacher in Africa; primary teacher trainer in the Caribbean, or science teacher trainer in Asia.

Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program

The Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program assists colleges and schools directly in adding an international dimension to education. Teachers from US universities, colleges, and elementary and secondary schools exchange positions with teachers at similar institutions in cooperating countries, usually for an academic year, though a few exchanges last only a semester or six weeks. Seminar programs are also available.

Requirements

You must:

- 1) be a U.S. citizen;
- 2) be fluent in English;
- 3) hold at least a Bachelor's degree;
- 4) have a current full-time teaching/administrative assignment;
- 5) be in at least your third year of full-time teaching/administration;
- 6) have the approval of your college/school administration;
- 7) have not participated in a full-year Fulbright teacher exchange in the last two years.

Next: Self-Evaluation

Know Thyself



Self-Evaluation

“The first lesson of power is that we are alone. The last lesson is that we are all one.”— Unknown

In the fluid, unregulated market of international teaching, the candidates that offer more – get more. The schools tap into talent by offering the best working conditions and compensation packages. The teachers tap into the market by offering the best professional skills and personal qualities. In other words, recruiters and candidates approach each other from different perspectives. For many candidates, an ideal image of a perfect overseas job is probably something like this:

- 🎬 School located in a warm, culturally rich country
- 🎬 Pays a lot of money in hard currency
- 🎬 Relaxed atmosphere
- 🎬 Reputable employer
- 🎬 Modern facilities
- 🎬 Not much work
- 🎬 Hardworking kids
- 🎬 Wonderful colleagues
- 🎬 Supportive administration
- 🎬 Spacious free housing
- 🎬 No bills, no tax
- 🎬 Lots of free time and fun

Schools approach candidates with a different set of requirements:

- 🎬 Loyal, reliable
- 🎬 Hard working, disciplined
- 🎬 Positive, people-oriented
- 🎬 Not demanding (\$\$, benefits)
- 🎬 Enjoys overtime
- 🎬 Understands the school's challenges
- 🎬 Loves kids
- 🎬 Minds her own business
- 🎬 Knows how to live in peace with everybody
- 🎬 No dependents
- 🎬 Degreed, certified, experienced
- 🎬 Flexible

In the tug of war of the recruiting process both the recruiters and the candidates are trying to get the most blanket. You must be a strong contender if you don't want to be left out in the cold.

In real life, everything is a compromise. Neither the schools nor the teachers always get what they want. The biggest mistake would be getting a job that is below your skill level. You must focus on the positions that require better qualifications and more experience than you currently have. This will provide you with a professional challenge and improve your self-esteem. It will also pay more.

The assessment has two realms: personal and professional. Job hunting for an overseas job places an emphasis on the PERSONAL realm. For many new candidates this is a discovery!

What does the personal realm consist of?

- 🎬 Citizenship
- 🎬 Sex
- 🎬 Age
- 🎬 Marital Status
- 🎬 Children
- 🎬 Native language
- 🎬 Sense of humor
- 🎬 Flexibility
- 🎬 Health
- 🎬 Race and religion

Why do the recruiters want to know all this personal information? For various reasons (including just being nosy) but mostly for the purpose of obtaining the best deal they can get - for the school. To the people who have never worked outside of their countries this information looks excessive, too personal and even offensive. Indeed, most countries do not allow questions of sexual orientation, age, marital status and the like to appear on the recruiter's questionnaires. Moreover, many of these questions are explicitly banned by law.

However, there is no way to escape these questions when you apply for an international job. Because you are going to need official permission to be legally employed in a foreign country, issued by this country's government. It is called a working visa, or a working permit. And every government has rules, red tape, stipulations, and restrictions.

Visa eligibility

All countries have various visa requirements for citizens of different countries. Sometimes it is legally impossible to hire a teacher of a particular nationality in a particular country (e.g. The International School of Havana, Cuba recruits teachers everywhere but the USA). Visa restrictions may be based on age, education, experience, and even marital status (some schools in the Middle East hire only married teaching couples). Brazil, for example, requires at least 2 years' experience. Age limits depend on the type of job and country and so on. Another reason to request the personal information is because many schools are responsible for the teachers' housing and other expenses - such as shipping allowance, insurance, airfare, etc. - so they need to know if you are bringing anyone with you.

Replacing an overseas hire in the middle of a school year is usually a messy business and the worst nightmare for a school director so they want to make sure that you are emotionally stable, responsible and a dependable individual, a committed professional who has no secret agendas and personal problems.

Not to mention the fact that some countries require male teachers for boys' classes and female teachers for girls'. Every school director has some kind of bad experience when they made the wrong hiring decision and had to pay dearly for it. So be prepared for some scrutiny on a personal level. In the end, it is in your own interest that the recruiter is able to select a group of compatible individuals that can work as a good team.

K-12 Jobs: Professional Realm

Who are the Alfa Dogs?

This is what the recruiters are looking for in a perfect candidate:

- 5 to 12 years of full-time teaching experience
- IB MYP PYP DP experience
- An advanced degree

- 🎬 Confidential recommendations
- 🎬 Loyal, positive, hard-working, people-oriented
- 🎬 No dependents

Schools often announce their “minimum” requirements. Depending on the supply and demand situation, the actual requirements float. They can go under the “minimum” 2 years’ experience and other qualifications if there are no takers.

More often, however, there is a surplus of qualified candidates so personalities begin to play a crucial role.

What Subject Areas are in demand?

You will be more marketable if you are certified in several subject areas and have varied experience. Unless your area is one of the IB subjects – these are in perennial demand!

Variety provides you with some flexibility that is often critical, especially if you are a teaching couple and you must find jobs at the same school.

Teaching couples are sometimes at a disadvantage when there is a vacancy for one spouse and nothing for the other. Teaching experience as well as certification in several subject areas increases your chances dramatically, especially with small schools; and many overseas schools are indeed small! Music teachers, Math teachers, Elementary teachers, Science teachers, Social Studies teachers, PE teachers and others are wanted everywhere. If you are one of them you have a large selection of schools and school systems to choose from.

Music teachers, Math teachers, IT teachers are in perennial demand and have less competition. Teachers with experience in IB programs are especially hot, regardless of the subject area.

Put yourself in a spotlight

The following checklist has been devised to help you quickly assess your

employment potential in three categories. Indicate which items pertain to you and give yourself a score.

Education and Certification

Bachelor's Degree +10

Master's +15

Master's in Education +20

No University Degree — 70

Teacher Certification +30

Teaching Experience

No Experience —20

1 year +10

2 years +15

3—7 years +20

7—15 years +15

15—20 years +10

Academic Achievement

Average 0

Excellent +10

Professional evaluation by at least 3 superiors

Average evaluations 0

Excellent evaluations +20

Extra job responsibility +10

If your score is 70 and above you stand a good chance to be considered for an overseas post at a major international school (provided you also have good interpersonal skills and use the proper recruiting strategy). If you score below 70, you may want to consider gaining experience at home before going overseas. Alternatively, look for work at language academies or enroll in an internship program.

Teaching Teams

If your spouse is also an educator it will be a major bonus to being hired to teach overseas. Here's why. The school saves money if you and your spouse are hired as a team. No visa problems and less legal red tape – as compared to a dependent spouse. Teaching teams are considered first at the conferences, then singles (although some schools prefer singles over teaching couples – this also depends on the time of year, couples need to attend the first round of conferences).

Since you are a partnership you will be able to take care of each other providing moral and emotional support once you have relocated overseas. Please note that this advantage can only be utilized early in the recruiting season when schools have the most openings. As jobs fill up couples find it increasingly difficult to find matching vacancies at the same school.

Singles

You stand a great chance of being hired, especially if you are qualified, flexible and will consider living with another single teacher. Focus on your professional qualifications and flexibility – your major assets as an educator. Singles should not panic while couples are being snatched up at the beginning of the season. Hold your horses! Your time comes at the second round of recruiting when schools are trying to fill the remaining openings – most couples will not be able to find matches at the same school. And here you come.

Cross-cultural experience

Teaching is teaching and most schools still look for reliable educators who can function well in a classroom rather than seasoned travelers. Unless your school

is located in a developing country with very limited resources your ability to cope with foreign environment will not be taken into account.

Likewise, if you are interviewing for a position with a Timbuktu Rainforest School, your past experience with US Peace Corps in the Amazon delta would be a big advantage.

Extra curricular activities

Remaining active and seeking out the local culture will improve the state of your mental health once you are overseas. Most schools actually REQUIRE your participation in their school events. Unlike travel, this area is essential if you want to get a good job. Always include extra curricular activities in your CV.

Hobbies

Statistically, the best jobs go to those who have **people-oriented hobbies** (e.g. running a book club vs. "reading"; giving guitar lessons vs. "listening to music"). Otherwise, it is best to avoid this entry in your CV.

Flexibility

Your flexibility as an educator will be important: there might possibly be space limitations, changes throughout the day, fluctuations within the student body throughout the year, and substitute teacher problems always. For these reasons, perfectionists as well as passive teachers are not wanted. Rigid individuals with high expectations of others need not bother, either. If you can't handle sudden changes and unusual situations – stay at home. You will be a burden for yourself as well as the whole school. There are very stable and organized schools but don't rely on it.

Sense of Humor

Nothing works quite like a sense of humor to keep your own and staff morale uplifted during the crisis times, which are sure to come sooner or later – in some capacity! Many recruiters specify a sense of humor as a job requirement.

Your ability to joke when others blow their fuse is essential. It is better to laugh

at yourself instead of getting angry. Warning. A sense of humor is taken seriously!

Easy Going Nature

Very important. Most International communities are relatively small – your ability to deal with ALL kinds of people is crucial. A moderate or low level of expectation of others is essential. Do not expect others to behave as you think they should. Remember that there are many cultural differences and your behavior in the eyes of others may also be perceived as weird or rude, although you mean only good.

For example, checking your bill in a restaurant will embarrass your guests in most countries. Blowing your nose is very disgusting in the eyes of the Japanese, etc. etc.

Emotional Stability

You must leave home on a positive note. You should not have unrealistic expectations but the general mood should be what we call “reserved excitement.”

Yes, a change of setting is often a healthy decision. However, if you have personal problems they may result in emotional instability that will follow you wherever you go.

For some people, leaving the old life behind can be healing, for others, the anxiety only increases

"I am a bit wary of middle aged women and men (sorry guys and girls) who have come out of some dreadful emotional trauma or boring office job back home and think that taking a TEFL course and moving to the Mediterranean will change their lives. Unfortunately, they usually bring all their emotional baggage with them and usually don't last through their very first January with marble floors and no central heating." —Director of a Language School in Italy

A test by Dr. Robert Kohls

Dr. Kohls suggests that any teacher going overseas should rate herself on a scale of one to five for each of these items. Assess your personal skills. Be honest.

Teaching couples should also evaluate each other. There are no good or bad answers. They become positive or negative only in a specific context.

- 🎬 Tolerance to ambiguity 1 2 3 4 5
- 🎬 Low goal/ task orientation 1 2 3 4 5
- 🎬 Open-mindedness 1 2 3 4 5
- 🎬 Non-judgementalness 1 2 3 4 5
- 🎬 Empathy 1 2 3 4 5
- 🎬 Communicativeness 1 2 3 4 5
- 🎬 Flexibility/ adaptability 1 2 3 4 5
- 🎬 Curiosity 1 2 3 4 5
- 🎬 Sense of humor 1 2 3 4 5
- 🎬 Warmth in human relationships 1 2 3 4 5
- 🎬 Motivation 1 2 3 4 5
- 🎬 Self-reliance 1 2 3 4 5
- 🎬 Strong sense of self 1 2 3 4 5
- 🎬 Tolerance for differences 1 2 3 4 5
- 🎬 Perceptiveness 1 2 3 4 5
- 🎬 Ability to fail 1 2 3 4 5

According to Dr. Kohls, your score must be above 45.

How Do I Measure Up?

What do recruiters look for when hiring teachers? A study published in the

Association for the Advancement of International Education's journal, Inter-Ed, showed that 37 school directors in the NESAs region highly valued the following qualities picked from an adjective check list:

- Reliable, Responsible, Intelligent, Sensible
- Professional, Stable, Energetic, Understanding
- Organized, Fair, Able, Caring

Perhaps more revealing is the list of adjectives written in, as they did not appear on the original list:

- Flexible, Adaptable, Creative, Dedicated
- Committed, Honest, Patient, Adventurous

Most school directors do NOT want teachers who are **Rigid, Passive, “Free,” Carefree, or Perfectionists.**

Why not perfectionists? Because they are inflexible and want everything done their way. In an international setting, where people of different backgrounds and cultures have to work together, such a teacher is always a big pain in the neck. If you are honest in appraising yourself as a teacher, this should give you some more insight as to your probabilities for success in an international school. Come to think of it, these are not bad descriptors for teachers any place in the world!” Jim Ambrose, Search Associates

K-12 Summary

The schools look for the candidates who have the following qualifications:

A. Professional Ranking:

- At least a BA/BS (4 year) degree for teaching positions.
- A MA degree for specialist, guidance counselor, and department head positions.

- 🎬 At least two years of current, full-time elementary or secondary school experience.
- 🎬 Confidential references from recent employers.
- 🎬 Teacher Certification (from any state / country).
- 🎬 IB experience / training
- 🎬 Overseas teaching experience

B. Personal Ranking:

- 🎬 Singles and married teaching couples (two teachers or teacher / administrator) without dependents.
- 🎬 Teaching couples with one or two children of school age. The rule of thumb is one dependent per full-time contract. Most schools do not accept candidates with more than two non teaching dependents (a non teaching spouse or dependent children, or both).
- 🎬 Single teachers with dependent children should consider other options, such as the US Department of Defense (DODEA) or MOD (UK). Even though we have seen such candidates succeed, the job search is usually quite difficult.
- 🎬 You should be committed for a 2-year contract.

In real life, there are innumerable combinations of qualifications and personal situations so don't get discouraged if your situation is unusual. There are literally thousands of people, all with their unique stories, so it takes a creative approach. Finding your niche is part of the game.

Overcoming Obstacles

"Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goal." – Henry Ford

When you decide to go overseas there are usually quite a number of challenges, big and small, to cope with. Some of them are universal while others apply to certain individuals. Some problems are temporary while others require a

prolonged intervention. Here are the major points to ponder.

Certification

Here's an email: "I no longer teach, but want to get back into teaching and want to do it in Western Europe. I have a Bachelor of Music degree and almost a year's worth of linguistics coursework done at the master's level. I gave up my dream about teaching in Europe because I had heard over and over again that in order to get a decent teaching job, I need to be certified. I don't have the funds to get certified at this time because many of the certification programs in the states are either on the west or east coast.

I have no teaching certificate. Can I get a good teaching job (with decent pay) in western Europe? If so, what are the guarantees that it will work?" —M.J.

Dear M.J. Let's be realistic here. Targeting popular locations requires excellent professional credentials. Not only in Europe, but anywhere in the world - the international schools look for certified teachers with 2+ years of full time classroom experience backed by good references. The days when being a native speaker of English qualified you for a job are long gone!

IB training/experience for high school (PYP, MYP for primary and middle school) are increasingly in demand. Uncertified teachers are hired as well, usually those with substantial teaching experience. You have to either broaden your search or upgrade your professional credentials. Or both! In the United States, there are various ALTERNATIVE certification programs. You have to invest in your own professional training if you are serious about teaching in Europe.

Here's our page on alternative certification routes:

<http://joyjobs.com/center/certification.htm>

By the way, the salary does not depend on the certification. Certification will determine, if you are hired or not. The pay scale is usually based **on education** (MA, BA) and **verified employment**.

As far as guarantees are concerned, there are no guarantees when it comes to employment. Much depends on your personality, how creative and persistent you are, how well you interview, etc., etc. The personal factor is very important!

My husband is not a teacher....

Your chances of being hired to teach overseas are limited if you are married and your spouse is not a teacher (unless you decide to leave him/ her at home). Naturally, if both of you are teachers your chances are good. The rule of thumb is one dependent (spouse or child) per one full-time teaching contract.

However, many schools do not accept any number of dependents for visa and other reasons. What to do? Your spouse may want to pursue a teaching certificate or at least a TEFL certificate before you go recruiting. One possibility is with the Department of Defense Dependent Schools. DODEA offers a variety of jobs in different areas of expertise. Secretaries, technicians, computer specialists, you name it. Spouses are preferred for employment.

If you apply with a dependent spouse your chances will also depend on the following circumstances: How strong a candidate the teaching spouse is. People have been hired based on the credibility of only one spouse. Schools capacity to provide housing and the cost of living in a particular country. Many schools post this information up front in their job ads. Whether they have dependent children and other circumstances, such as visa requirements for dependents. There are all kind of vacancies on the military bases: from office secretaries to auto mechanics and computer engineers. Due to the variety of jobs available at US military bases, a non-teaching spouse has good chances of being employed.

It is essential to be flexible about geography, research and apply it to a wide range of schools. There are thousands of various schools all over the world, you never know where the opportunity may come from.

Dependent children

Children are not always a problem. Much depends on the children's age, their number and if their parents are both teachers. Most schools provide free tuition for dependent children so it is important that they are old enough to attend the school. A small child (up to 3 years old) is usually a problem and we suggest you wait a couple years before applying.

Some cultures are friendlier to families and children than others. For example, the schools in the Middle East are usually willing to accommodate families with

kids providing housing, flights, etc. Some of the schools in the region actually require that the teachers be married couples. Because of the security concerns this region may not be so popular with western teachers - which creates yet another opportunity for those with an adventurous spirit.

Otherwise, it is generally a drawback especially if the school ends at grade 8 and you have to pay for a private boarding school. Unfortunately, single parents are at the bottom of the barrel. The schools that receive many applications are pickier about teaching candidates. Those in less popular locations (and especially in countries with low cost of living where housing is not a major expense) will consider teachers with dependents.

Many recruiting agencies do not accept applications from teachers with dependent children, so be prepared to establish direct contacts with schools. You have more chances if your child is old enough to attend the same school. The DoDEA schools are definitely an option for such families as their hiring policies do not take into the account the applicants family situation. Sometimes, however, it seems there is no solution - if you have many small children and your spouse is not an educator. Some people prefer to wait until their children are on their own and then go overseas.

Debt

When you move to a cheaper country your expenses go down while your loan payments remain the same. So it looks like your debt actually became bigger! If you are at an early stage in your overseas research it is a good idea to consider "outsourcing" some of the major expenses, for example, by obtaining your degree abroad. Earning a degree at an American college in Greece or other country saves a lot of money - to say nothing about the unparalleled international exposure.

Years ago when we attended an informational session offered by the director of the Ben Franklin school in Barcelona, he flatly stated that anyone with any sort of debt at all, even a student loan, shouldn't even consider accepting a job in Barcelona. The school didn't offer accommodation and this was a primary expense to consider. After all, it is an expensive city.

Working in a developing country usually enables you to save money – provided

you do not earn a local salary! Working overseas isn't always a moneymaking proposition, so look at your financial situation seriously. Going abroad is not always the best solution if you have tight financial obligations.

Age

We receive many questions about age. There are two groups of applicants: those who are afraid that they are too young and those who think they are too old. Everyone seems to be uneasy about it. Relax: generally, age is not a problem as long as you are healthy, qualified and have relevant experience. We have taught with people of all ages. However, there are certain circumstances you should consider. All countries have visa restrictions - based on qualifications, nationality, type of job and yes - age. Senior and leadership positions that require advanced qualifications and experience are less age restrictive than the regular classroom jobs. Some countries do not issue work visas to those over 60. Language schools are especially rigid about hiring older teachers. If you are looking for an ESL position with a local language school your chances are much better if you are in your 20-s or 30-s. If you are older you have to target the K-12 international schools.

In conclusion: flexibility is key!

Think twice before applying for an overseas job if...

- you find it hard to adapt to change;
- you are going (or have just gone) through a relationship break-up;
- you are having major financial problems;
- you have a serious medical condition or someone close has a major illness;
- you feel deeply attached to your possessions;
- if you are only trying to get away from an unpleasant situation (at work or at home);

- if your expectations of structure, order, and predictability make uncertainty and flexibility uncomfortable to cope with.

“When a man finds no peace within himself it is useless to seek it elsewhere.”

— L. A. Rouchefoliocauld

Next: Your Webpage Setup

Your webpage setup

Application: The Joyjobs Approach

The Joyjobs approach involves the use of a personal webpage.

Your Application Package (A.P.)*

- 🎬 Summary
- 🎬 Teaching Philosophy
- 🎬 Photo
- 🎬 CV / resume
- 🎬 Testimonials



Teaching couples follow the same guidelines, submitting 2 sets of files for 2 individual webpages. They will be linked together for a joint application.

***ATTENTION! Your presentation is as strong as its weakest link. For example, a casual selfie posted as the cover image may render the entire application unprofessional. Take your time to prepare a quality presentation.**

Email setup (optional)

A lost message can mean the loss of a lucrative contract and a few years of wonderful experience. The reliability of your communication system is paramount. The major problem is spam.

If your current email address receives a lot of spam (check out your Spam / Bulk folder) you may want to set up a dedicated account specifically for your job search campaign.

Never use work email in a job search. Jobs change, your email account should be

able to travel with you. College graduates, nothing screams louder of inexperience than an application from an EDU account. In a similar vein, avoid AOL and other legacy services: they make you look dated.

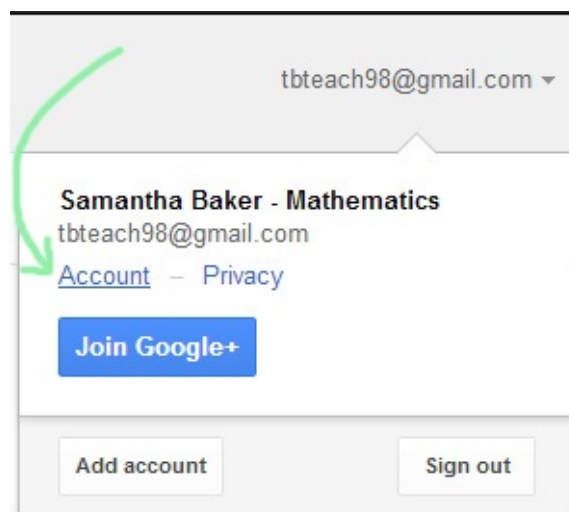
Make every effort to give your messages some boost: most schools are saturated with incoming mail which makes it hard for your application to get through.

For a new account, start by choosing a username.

It does not need to be meaningful, any combination of letters and numbers will do. Just keep it short! Some people compose descriptive usernames only to have them too long / pretentious to be useful, for example:
mathbestteacherwesternhemisphere@gmail.com

Your account setup will determine how your messages look on the recruiter's screen, if they are going to stand out among other applications, or not. Here's the critical step: Indicate your teaching area in the box reserved for your last name.

Most email systems will allow you to do it, as long as you stay away from the PROFILE panel, which is for personal data.



So, insert BOTH your first and last name into the *First name* box, for example [Samantha Baker] The second box is reserved for your last name, but we will use it for your teaching area, for example, [Mathematics] This way, your messages look prominent in the recruiters mailbox.

Enter your main teaching area only. There isn't much room, especially if your name is long. (Teaching couples should use the last name, followed by their main teaching areas.)

Now the schools will see your name and teaching area right where your competition will only have their names. Why is it important? Because most filtering is done at this level. Recruiters do not care for names, they scan email headers for the teaching areas to match job titles!

Send a message to yourself, to see how it appears in your mailbox. Everything about you speaks to the recruiter, so make sure both your first and last names are capitalized, and there are no odd spaces and characters.

To minimize spam, keep this account private. No messages to friends, no family emails from it. Use it strictly for the communication with prospective schools. This will keep your email spam-free and uncluttered. Next, we'll look at the webpage.

1. The Header

The webpage real estate has a high price, especially the top of your page. Spend it only on:

- 🎬 Your Name
- 🎬 Specialization - Math, English, Science, Librarian, etc.
- 🎬 Job fair(s) e.g. Attending the UNI fair in February
- 🎬 Contact info: email and Skype
- 🎬 Additionally, you may include a video presentation. For example, most music teachers add a YouTube or Vimeo sample.

Do not worry about the fair information so far. You can always change or remove it. To the recruiter, however, it is important as it shows that you are SERIOUS.

Resist the temptation to include every piece of information and every

testimonial: large, expanded webpages appear weak. A good presentation is brief and to the point.

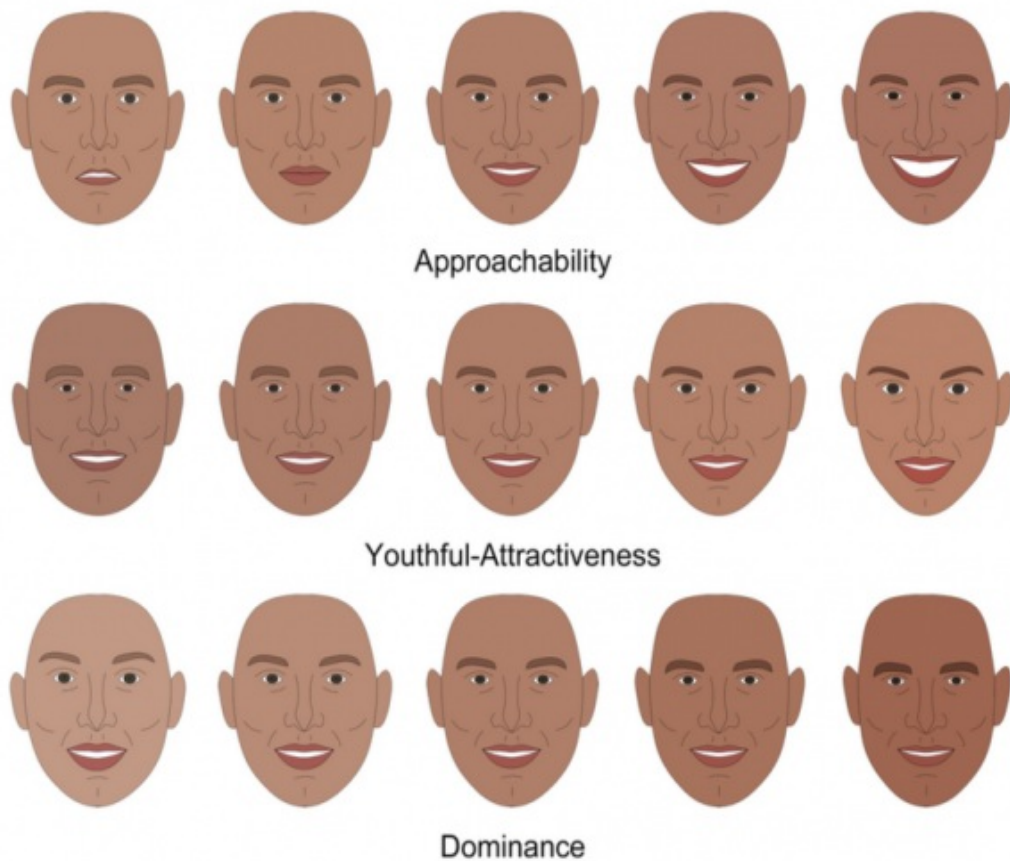
2. The Photo

Did you notice that all international schools require a photo? This is because your temperament, intelligence, organization, style and culture show through the image. (Recruiters want to know even more: your race, sex, age, facial features and body type.)

A lot of important things can be communicated non-verbally. For example, a shaved head with a tattoo on it may be questionable for candidates of certain age/sex in certain countries.

A new study by researchers at the University of York in the UK suggests that it is possible to predict what first impressions a person will attract from their facial features.

"Showing that even supposedly arbitrary features in a face can influence people's perceptions suggests that careful choice of a photo could make (or break) others' first impressions of you," says study author Richard Vernon, PhD.



Although these judgements are often flawed, they can still influence our behavior. By looking at a picture of a candidate and deeming them untrustworthy, for instance, the recruiter may be less likely to shortlist them for an interview.

Our first impressions of another individual can be divided into three "dimensions" - approachability (will this person help or harm us?), dominance (do they have the ability to help or harm us?) and youthful-attractiveness.

The Power of Image

Your photo is the first thing the schools see when they open your webpage. Its impact is decisive. The common question we receive with photo submissions is as follows:

—Is this photo acceptable?

Acceptable is the word we use for picture IDs, such as your passport. If it is only acceptable, it knocks you down into the large pool of mediocre applications. In this chapter, we are talking about marketing and self-promotion! Your cover photo should be great, not “acceptable.”



Why is it so? On average recruiters spend just 6-10 seconds looking at your CV

before deciding whether you are a worthy candidate. Your picture is critical, as the research has revealed that recruiters spend 20% of their time looking at your image.

What does your image say about you? Does it give out the right message? Does it portray you as professional and approachable? Is it recent ? (Based on your photo, will they be able to recognize you on Skype?)

Never forget that your picture always produces an effect. If it's not positive, it's negative. Everything that can enhance your marketing message is an opportunity. If your picture is not awesome it should not be on your recruitment webpage!

Taking the best image

Taking a good picture is basically the avoidance of being sloppy: low resolution, digital noise, harsh light, camera shake, color-casts, and so on. Use a real camera in good light. Wash and dry your face before taking pictures. A bit of makeup is always a good idea. Faces tend to look greasy because of the natural oils. If you have a nice picture which looks a bit too shiny, submit it anyway. We will remove the shine in Photoshop.

Approachability is key. So, smile!

Minor changes accumulate, leading to a major improvement. In the following example, adding a tie and shooting with a light diffuser changes the photo from casual to professional.



Diffused light is essential! Nobody looks good in direct sunlight: it's too harsh, too contrasty. That's why you always see assistants with massive reflectors in any professional photo shoot. One way to soften the flash is cover it with a DIY diffuser, such as a piece of paper. Here are some practical ideas <http://kidsactivitiesblog.com/5839/photo-shoot-recycled-items>

Likewise, most indoor situations are too dim for a decent image: your sensor will boost the digital noise to an unacceptable level, especially if you use a cell phone.

Use a real camera.

Backgrounds. Avoid clutter: furniture, light fixtures, door knobs, etc. Never take selfies in your kitchen, bathroom, or bedroom. A white or light gray background works the best, although many other options are possible.

It is true that a bad photo can ruin your employment chances. For example, a school administrator pictured in his cluttered office conveys a strong impression of disorganization — no matter how much he claims to be organized in his C.V.

Group images are generally to be avoided. The recruiter wants to see you, not other folks. Likewise, avoid tourist-style images: posing in front of monuments, buildings or picturesque landscapes. Even less appropriate: pictures taken at

social events (dim light, heavy makeup, jewelry, etc.)

Posing with students. Losing yourself in a crowd of kids is not a good idea either. Besides, it may be illegal in your locality to publish their photos without the parents' permission.

Watch out for details. For example, a pencil in your hand may look like a cigarette. Mismatched clothes are a common problem.

Scans tend to have a vintage feel that make people wonder if the picture was taken decades ago.



Control dominance. Recruiters are less likely to respond to teachers who appear too dominant.

On the other hand, younger candidates and those who apply for leadership jobs will benefit by showing more authority. For example, by lowering the camera and /or employing a sitting position.

Cropping: Tight crops may look too close for comfort. You want to appear personal but not intimate.

Obviously, no sunglasses.

The overall technical quality must be flawless. For example, blocked highlights, color shifts or digital noise will ruin everything. Presenting yourself by a technically inferior photograph is like wearing soiled clothes and body odor in a job interview.

3. The Summary

You open your page with a summary — three or four charged paragraphs.

Most candidates compose a brief essay, which outlines their work experience. Such narrative is the easiest to write. It also allows you to embed your teaching philosophy, to simplify your webpage layout.

Career highlights and Professional Summary are most common CV openers. Transfer this section to your webpage, incorporating it with your Teaching Philosophy as explained above.

This always makes a compelling grabber - provided you boil it down to the essentials.

Grab attention

Time is of essence so start your summary with your biggest assets. List your teaching credentials and experience. If the school does not see this information immediately they move to the next candidate. Indicate your biggest achievements but save all the details for the resume.

Look at your copy from the recruiter's viewpoint. Don't toot your horn with adjectives and adverbs — "I am highly organized, efficient, professional, ethical, enthusiastic, and excel at problem-solving and critical thinking and analysis." This only makes recruiters yawn.

Your goal is to glue the employer to the screen. How?

Focus on the school's needs!

The recruiters are looking for individuals to solve their school's problems. The biggest mistake you can make is to start telling them what YOU want from the job. Here's an example of such a rant: "I am sure that working for you will give me an excellent opportunity to acquire some international experience. I am very interested in polishing my Spanish skills. I would like to meet people and make new friends. For me, it's a chance to discover a part of our world and a new culture at the same time."

Do you really think it thrills the recruiter to read about your travel opportunities, food and music? The recruiter needs you to do the work. Instead of listing your expectations, show how you can be of use to the school.

The schools will judge you based on the quality of your online presentation. If in doubt, err on the side of being more formal.

A common tendency for new candidates is to employ the tone of a friendly chat. While this is acceptable in your email communication, the written style of your webpage is expected to be professional. This applies to all online presentations including video clips and slideshows.

Avoid contractions, colloquialisms, ellipses such as **s/he**, **I've**, as well as the use of the apostrophe to indicate plural.

The recruiter's logic is that if you tolerate sloppy writing in your professional presentation, you will tolerate even more in your daily work.

Tip: remove all references to a hiring committee or a school district. (International schools are not run by districts and hiring is done by the school director).

Please see the summary samples in the Appendix.

Attention: your webpage is not a cover letter!

One's initial reaction is to submit a cover letter, in order to publish it as a webpage. Which is exactly what you should not do.

Webpages are for a broader audience so there is no greeting, as a rule. (Personalize your cover letter - an invitation to visit your webpage, sent to specific schools / persons.)

The webpage gives you an advantage over the typical applicant, who will try to squeeze as much info as possible in their cover letter and attachments, which often fail the spam test and get lost.

Your online application will consist of 2 parts. The cover letter goes by email and your webpage is what the schools see when they click on the link in your email message. The 2 parts must work together but they are not the same.

In other words, you need two separate messages:

1. Your email message

Your cover letter is only a teaser. It is small and catchy. It does not annoy people with volume and detail. Once interested, recruiters simply follow the hyperlink.

2. Your webpage

Your webpage must read as a logical continuation of the email.

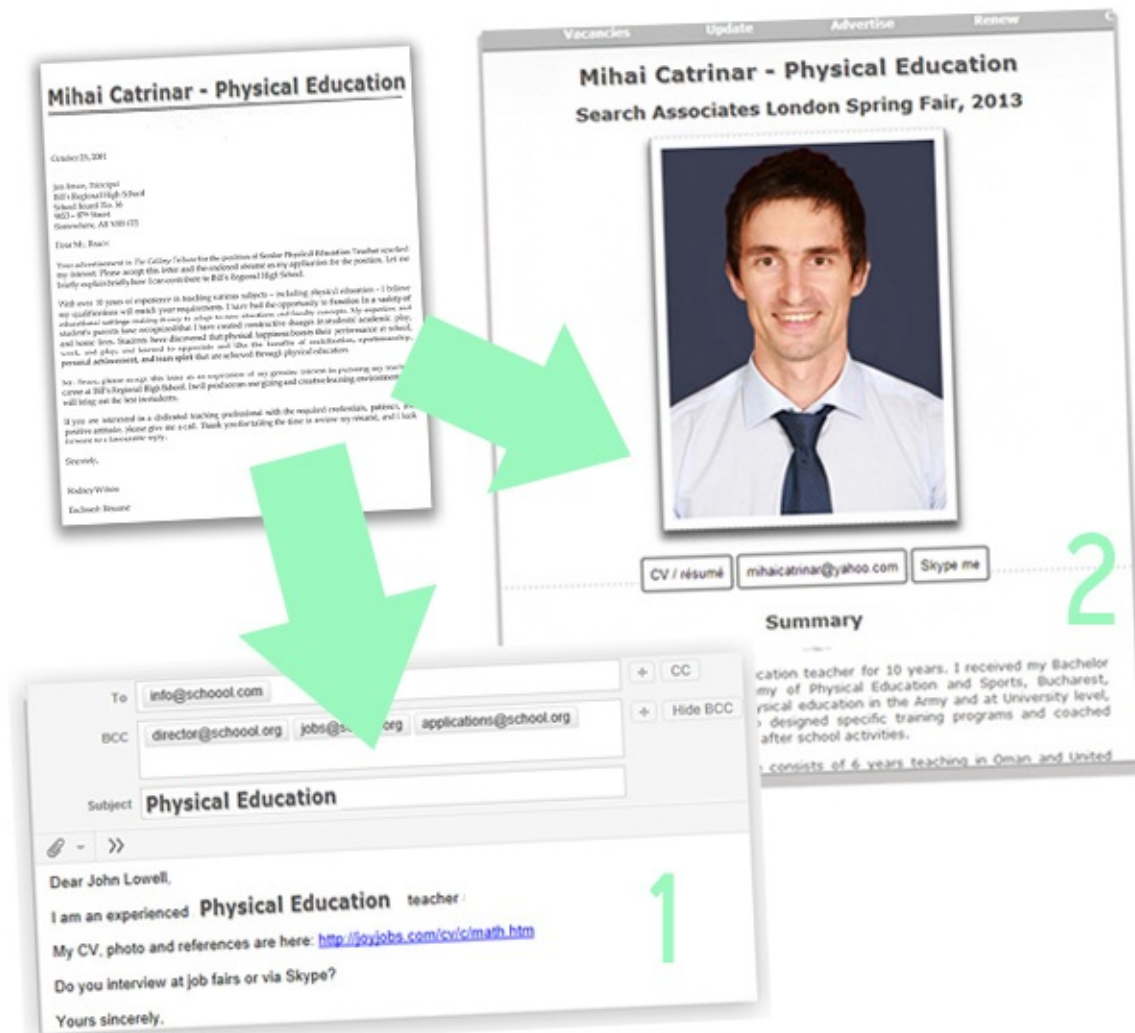
This two-stage engagement makes it easier to penetrate their defenses. It's a departure from the traditional cover letter style, when you carry all your eggs in one basket (including the attached scans and certificates).

It is essential that these two parts work together well, because this is how the schools will read them: first, they open your email, and then they click on your link to read your webpage.

Here lies probably the most frequent mistake: many candidates submit the exact same text for their cover letters and their webpages. Essentially, they make schools read the same message twice. To schools, it is evidence that the candidate is perhaps not very bright. The worst scenario is when the same intro is also the beginning of their CV /resume as well ("PROFILE").

Obviously, once you begin communicating with the schools they may request

more information from you, which you provide on an individual basis. Meanwhile, keep your initial presentation to the bare minimum and clutter-free.



4. Your Teaching Philosophy

This is an important part of your application. Most recruiting agencies also require it, although they may call it a different name. For example, "Narratives." A brief version of your teaching philosophy will go online on your Joyjobs webpage.

A teaching philosophy will make your whole Application Package consistent. From the beginning, think about your own teaching style. Only then will you be able to provide a coherent and strong argument, consistent with your personality and professional background.

When preparing your teaching philosophy think about your job interviews. A solid teaching philosophy will help you navigate through all those questions.

Include teaching strategies and methods to help people “see” you in the classroom. Write in present tense. The use of declarative cliches (such as “all children can learn” or “the only way to teach is to use class discussion”) could be potentially detrimental

Simply stating a few common ideas will not get you ahead of the competition. Moreover, it can be a trap. You may find yourself vulnerable and exposed in a job interview situation, if the recruiter decides to dig deeper into your methods with specific inquiries. So make sure to devote a solid block of time to make an original teaching philosophy.

Likewise, avoid overused quotations. The absolute favorite (incorrectly attributed to Benjamin Franklin) seems to be the following:

Tell me and I will forget.

Show me and I will remember.

Involve me and I will understand.

Write about your experiences in your own words. Avoid borrowing from others. Authentic presentations work best, so make sure it's all your own material.

Identify your target market correctly.

From time to time, we receive narratives that emphasize the candidate's experience in teaching children from illiterate immigrant families or inner city kids. These candidates presume that the international schools cater to the educational needs of the poor and underprivileged people in third-world countries. In fact, the opposite is true. Most international schools enroll students from the upper class families, as well as expatriate circles, diplomats and business communities. Acceptance is often based on admission tests. Many schools have long waiting lists. In other words, do not approach International schools as charity projects for poor kids.

Theorists’ vs Practitioners

New teachers often submit verbose paragraphs that sound like a chapter from a textbook. Recruiters, meanwhile, look for tested classroom practitioners.

It is understandably hard to come up with anything practical when you do not have any classroom experience. Nonetheless, do not give up so easily. Use every little bit of your own experience – student teaching, volunteering, or just observing. The two common areas to cover: your general view on education; and your specific teaching style.

This is what a recruiter wants to see when she clicks on your link. Another type of philosophy would be to focus on your teaching methods to address a specific question. For example, how do you teach reading?

Perspective: Job Interview

Here are some job interview questions that may help you compose your teaching philosophy:

- If you were one of your students, what would you say about your teaching?
- Think of an activity you used that you feel was both successful and a good reflection of you as the kind of teacher you want to be.
- How do you establish rapport in your classes?
- Think of an activity that bombed in the classroom. Why do you think it didn't work? How would you change it and/or the way you presented it? Why?
- How do you go about motivating students?
- How do you feel about grading?
- What do you do for your own professional development?
- What do you think makes an excellent teacher?
- How do you feel teachers can get better at what they do?
- How can materials help?

(Please see the Teaching Philosophy Samples in the Appendix.)

5. Your CV / Resume

While there is a difference between the two document types in academia, the K-12 international schools use the two terms interchangeably. For the sake of simplicity, we are going to use the term CV as a resume with the addition of some personal data.

Schools need personal data to determine if you are eligible for a work visa. There are various limits, including age, nationality, children and other details, so do not be surprised to see all these personal entries.

The CV and Resume Sampler

By all means, use our Templates. They are designed to give the schools exactly the info they are looking for, in the format they prefer. We suggest that you give it a try, even if you like your current CV.

Some people worry that our CV templates do not have the appearance of a full-blown document. To address “the problem”, they begin to pile up stuff of lesser value.

Commercial resume writing houses exploit the human weakness for volume, by charging hundreds of dollars for what is nothing more than fluff. Fluff only weakens your presentation! Do not try to force-feed schools with volumes of minute detail they do not want. **Keep your CV slim.**

Again, the biggest stumbling block is the inflated size of the old-style CV. The recruiter has only a few seconds for an initial evaluation. Obscuring your main strengths with minute details ("OBJECTIVE", "CURRENT ADDRESS", "DUTIES", etc.) shifts their attention to the next candidate.

Additional Files (Optional)

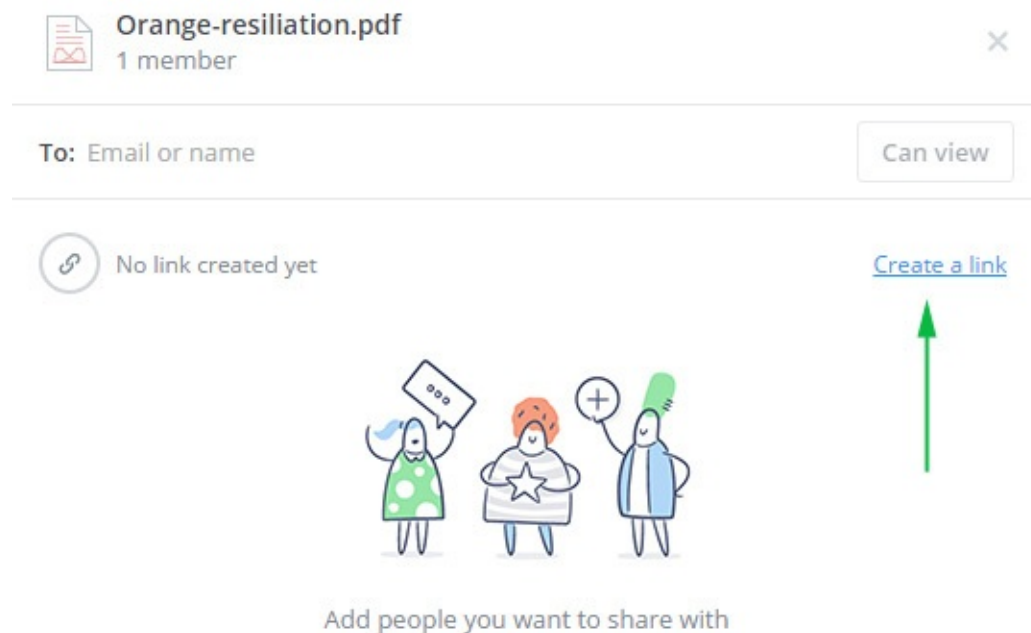
To feel more confident, some people publish their degrees, diplomas, letters of reference and so on. Most schools have no interest in seeing photos of your degrees and other paper documents. However, if you wish to include them in

your webpage, here's how to do it.

1. Upload your files to **DropBox**
2. Select the files to create links for sharing
3. Send your links at resume@joyjobs.com

The details: <https://www.dropbox.com/en/help/167>

Sample: sharing the file **Orange-resiliation.pdf**



“After I set up a page with you I’ve been getting an average of two inquiries per day.” —Teacher


The Secret of a Killer Webpage

This is the only time that we mention it, so

 Orange-resiliation.pdf
1 member

To: Email or name

Can view

 No link created yet

[Create a link](#)



Add people you want to share with

write it down.
It starts with the letter T:

TESTIMONIALS!

The difference between a good candidate and a mediocre one is often that the latter toots his own horn louder. In fact, if you want to be taken seriously, avoid self-praise altogether. In your summary, state only the hard cold facts. Have your referees confirm your credibility through their letters of references and testimonials.

Most in demand: credibility

Just like in business, testimonials are the preferred guerrilla tool. Why so? Because they work! Did you notice how many testimonials the Joyjobs.com pages have? There is a reason for that. People's feedback is the **ONLY** way we can prove our credibility. Likewise, credibility is everything when it comes to getting a job. So, use testimonials and you will go far!

Not all referees are equal

The schools want to know what your past employers have to say about you. It's your principal's opinion on you that your new school will trust the most. Absence of such information is a red flag, even if you have glowing letters

written by other teachers, students and parents. In fact, all you really need is a few quotes from your past and current principals / directors. You can skip the rest.

Psychologically, the recruiter is connected to other employers. It's what previous employers have written about you that is relevant. References from your immediate supervisors are the #1 priority.

Quotes

Some candidates submit entire letters for publication. We suggest that you select only the most poignant pieces and publish them selectively, as quotes.

Unlike the formal letters, quotes need not be dated. This is a sensitive issue as many letters can't be used after a certain period of time. Select the best ones and organize them to your advantage.

Limit the number of quotes to 4-6 (most people will not read more than that) stressing your professional traits, your flexibility, your team work and a sense of humor.

ALERT: Avoid posting anything written by children, especially young children. Students' feedback may be genuine but using it for personal gains is often perceived as exploitative.

Line up Your Referees

The written testimonials on your webpage will only help you get shortlisted. To get hired, you will need actual referees. That is, live people to confirm in private what is written in those letters.

The schools are aware of the fact that the vast majority of recommendations are inflated and should not be taken at their face value. The only credible recommendations are confidential. Therefore... Communicate with your referees!

Ask them if this is OK if they are contacted. Make sure they are going to confirm privately what they put in writing. Otherwise, all those testimonies and praise have no value. In fact, they can damage you, if your referee says something totally opposite in a private phone call. If you have a strong feeling

that a referee is not sincere, do not list them. In a conflicting situation, try to find a solution BEFORE you leave your job. Try to resolve issues in an open and honest manner. An unresolved conflict may haunt you for a long time. Just recently, we had a situation when one of our members was unable to register for a job fair. A director from a past job (4 years ago) refused to cooperate. Written letters of reference are a no-brainer.

The most difficult part is to ask. Many of us feel uneasy about it. However, there is no way to work around it. So, leave your doubts behind and say the word. You will find out that most people are quite willing to write a few nice words for you. In fact, for most school directors writing recommendations is a habit. What if you have tensions with your director? Ask anyway! It is not uncommon to receive quite nice letters from those with whom you have had some problems in the past. There are different reasons why it works. If your relations are strained, your principal can be inspired by your leaving and may express his/her delight in the form of a positive letter.

– I have no job, how can I get a recommendation?

Don't panic. There are many ways to deal with this problem. Many people and organizations need your help, it is easy to arrange a stint as a volunteer. Because you don't receive monetary compensation, the administrator/ supervisor/parents you work with are always excellent sources of outstanding references. They are more than willing to pay you back for your time with a nice letter of recommendation.

Cut the deadwood!

The biggest error is to make your webpage large and inclusive. Recruiters like it when your presentation is small and focused. To focus a webpage is to remove everything which is not directly supporting your message.

The Final Checklist:

- 🎬 There is no social security number on your visa application. Your name is your identity. So make sure your first and last names are spelled exactly the same as in your passport.
- 🎬 Use your dedicated email account consistently. It has to be the same throughout all your files: resume, webpage, application letters.
- 🎬 Never supply two or three email addresses, this only confuses the schools. Teaching couples, use a shared email account, too.
- 🎬 Make sure your experience is listed in the reversed chronological order.
- 🎬 Skip your postal address and other space-consuming and irrelevant entries (*Travel, Hobbies, etc.*)

Send in your files for assembly

In a day or two after you submit your information, you will receive your unique internet address, the URL. Open the page and verify the details. Some adjustments are often necessary, such as replacing a word, fixing a comma and the like. Email us the directions or, for bigger changes, use the UPDATE link on top of the navigation bar.

Never mess with your URL!

You will need to insert your page URL in the application email, CV, and other communication.

Some people are unaware that URLs are case-sensitive, so they “improve” the formatting by capitalizing, adding spaces, etc. When the page won't load they send us support requests, *What happened to my webpage?* Nothing! It's still there, as long as you spell it correctly.

Any URL modifications will turn your fully functional website to “Error 404 - Page not found.” Paste your page link in all your files exactly as we send it to

you. **No alterations!**

Once you land a job, don't rush to delete your webpage. Automatically, it will be parked free of charge, should you decide to look for a new contract in 2-5 years.

Get into Action!

“The secret of getting ahead is getting started.”— Mark Twain

After reading your webpage the director should exclaim, “Wow! I must email her right now!” As soon as you start promoting your page you will see how powerful it is. The key word here is **promotion**.

A well-done application package upgrades you to the level of superior candidate. Its impact is twofold – you project a strong image to the recruiter and at the same time it gives you the confidence that is often the winning factor in a job search.

Question: Is my website already sent to these foreign schools who may need my services? I am asking this, since I have yet to get a response from any school out there.

Answer: This is a competitive market! The schools do not comb the internet in search of candidates. It is your job to reach them. If you do not — your competition will!

Always apply on your own behalf, one school at a time.

Keep in mind that schools do not want to hear from third parties, they want to hear from YOU! Employing third party marketing services to broadcast your application is the same as spamming. We do not recommend it as a recruitment method.

Next: Application (Generate Hot Leads)

Generate Hot Leads

“Even if you are on the right track you’ll get run over if you just sit there.”—Will Rogers



Responding to job ads

The overseas teaching market is fairly small (compared to the public school sector in any given country). You cannot expect to find whatever you want in every country and every recruiting season. The number of schools is limited and most of them prefer the teachers who are already in the system, who are with another international school in another country.

Many schools do not know exactly what positions will be available - until every current teacher submits a formal notice. The information that the schools initially submit is almost never accurate. A series of updates is always required. The point is that vacancy posts are not reliable. All situations change, new opportunities open and re-open, positions get filled while they are still shown as “available.”

Requirements and “Requirements”

You must be already aware of the two types of requirements — compulsory requirements and those that the school can modify under certain circumstances.

There is little to say about compulsory requirements. Some of them have nothing to do with the school itself as they originate in the legal system of the host country (e.g. visa and work permit requirements). Other mandatory requirements may be part of the school employment policy that the recruiter cannot overrule.

Some examples are: a European citizenship if you apply with a school that operates under the European Union labor legislation; a Bachelor’s degree; a marriage certificate for couples who want to teach in Saudi Arabia and so on. If you cannot meet the mandatory requirements don’t waste your time trying to overcome them. Look elsewhere.

The second type of requirement is what the school would like to see in its teachers, on a professional and personal level. They allow some flexibility so the recruiter can accept some deviations or lower the ante if there are no suitable candidates. For example, a recruiter is interested in a teacher who has 3 years of experience working with the 10–11 year olds in a specific setting like a Montessori school. For this position, a teacher with similar experience or simply a teacher with interesting ideas and a proven record can be hired just as well. A two-year contract can be reduced to a one-year job if no long-term candidate is available and so on.

Application is a request for info!

Reputable schools list their salaries and benefits on their employment pages. When it comes to job ads, however, the information is usually insufficient. By applying, you make no commitment: you simply request more information.

In other words, when you respond to ads, your goal is to solicit more information. (Many people have it backwards: they expect the information in order to decide if they should apply.)

This is an important point: unless you apply, many schools will not offer much info. To eliminate unqualified candidates, schools tend to respond to only selected applications. That is why responding to job ads is not much different from speculative applications!

Timing

Even though there are openings all year round, the bulk of the recruitment is done in winter - spring. This is to allow sufficient time for visa processing and relocation. Most schools require that you report to work in August, so the common timeline is as follows:

- 📅 Summer - research the market and prepare your application package;
- 📅 Fall - apply;
- 📅 Winter - interviews, contracts;

📅 Spring - visas;

📅 Summer - relocation.

Late-season openings

Every year we notice a big jump in recruitment when the schools are supposed to be on summer vacations. Why is this sudden demand?

1. Many teachers who were hired at the winter fairs find better jobs via Joyjobs / Skype in the consecutive months. Their positions re-open.
2. Some teachers do not report back to work after summer vacations.
3. Personal emergencies - illnesses, babies, divorces, etc.
4. Enrollment has increased. School Boards will often meet in May and upon reviewing their enrollment projections, discover that the numbers are up.

The Advantages. When pressed for time, even the top-tier schools become desperate. Jobs must be filled ASAP, so even modestly-qualified candidates have great chances. Late season recruitment is particularly fruitful for older candidates and teachers who have little or no experience.

Last-minute applications are done differently.

There is no time to develop a webpage. Apply with your cover letter, CV (PDF or MS Word) and a photo. Make sure to include 2-3 contact names for references at the end of your CV.

Hard-to-find openings

Take Speech and Language Pathologists, for example. Few schools employ these specialists. Use a one-word query (speech) and select **Search all posts**.

This will give you a list of relevant ads to use as leads. The logic is that since most international jobs are temporary, these positions will inevitably re-open. As a result, you will have a list of potential and active schools that employ speech and language pathologists.

The screenshot shows the JOYJOBS.COM website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'JOYJOBS.COM' and a 'Job Log' link. Below this is a search bar with the text 'speech' and a 'Search' button. A green arrow points to the search bar, and a red circle with the number '1' is next to it. Below the search bar, there's a dropdown menu with 'Search all posts'. On the left side, there's a list of job postings, each with a title, location, and date. A red circle with the number '2' is next to one of the postings. On the right side, there's a detailed view of a job posting for 'Position 1: Occupational Therapist'. A red circle with the number '3' is next to the title 'Position 2: Speech Language Pathologist/Therapist'.

Teaching Jobs **OVERSEAS** *Travel the World. Get paid for it.* [Log Out](#) ☒

speech
Search all posts

Speech and Drama - Singapore
13 Aug 2014
Math, Chemistry, Science, Art, Music - Vietnam
9 Jun 2014
Speech and Language Therapist - England, UK
3 Jun 2014
English Speech & Debate; English Literature - Shanghai, PRC
12 May 2014
Speech Pathologist (50%) - South Korea
25 Mar 2014
Speech & Language Therapist; Occupational Therapist ; Assistant Administrator - Hong Kong
20 Mar 2014
Speech and Language Therapist; Occupational Therapist - England, UK
20 Mar 2014
Speech & Language Therapist - Grand Cayman, Caribbean
16 Feb 2014
French / Spanish , Business & Management , Director of Admissions; ICT, Speech / Language Therapist, Secondary Administrator Primary

Position 1: Occupational Therapist

Qualifications and Experience:

- Graduate of an accredited WFOT Occupational Therapy Program
- Licensed or registered to practice in their home country
- Minimum two (2) years clinical experience. Experience working with children in the areas of Autism Spectrum Disorder, Motor Development, Sensory Processing Disorders and Special Education would be an asset
- Proficiency in English and/or Mandarin; other native language speakers will be considered

Key Responsibilities:

- Understand and apply the concepts of Occupational Performance when enabling clients and their families
- Apply a client-centred approach when developing and implementing OT goals which are occupation-focused, targeted and measurable.
- Provide direct service, consultation, mediation and education to client, family and community providers with a focus on maximizing a child's function in the areas of self-care; productivity (school and play skills) and leisure (community participation)
- Utilize research to establish and support evidence-based practice
- Provision of in-school consultations to parents and/or teachers as and when needed

Position 2: Speech Language Pathologist/Therapist

Qualifications and Experience:

Generic vs Specific

Oftentimes job announcements are very general. And there is a reason for that.

Don't corner yourself with a very narrow job title. Give yourself some leeway. Most teachers have a variety of experiences, and many candidates are certified in several areas. This is good, because you may need this flexibility. In fact, be prepared for a variety of variables. A job ad for a second grade classroom position may develop into a PYP Curriculum Coordinator job as you communicate with the school.

Many schools are stable and continue with the same job descriptions and recruitment process, year after year. More common, however, is that things change. For example, it may be decided that a certain area of the curriculum needs more attention. Or, there is a shift in the student body which requires that the school re-group. It's typical that a new school leadership will seek alterations in the faculty and recruitment policies.

To accommodate these requests, the HR will start making moves towards hiring new people. The HR may not always know what these new people should be. So

the job specifications will remain vague, with the hope the recruiting team will be able to figure it all out during the hiring process. Which may or may not materialize!

With the majority of new international schools being for-profit, the recruiters try to load your job description with as much work as possible. You have to watch out. Being flexible is essential in the initial stage, when you are generating leads. However, keep your perspective on the goal. Once a selection is made, try to eliminate all questionable and vague areas in your contract. It is not uncommon that the interviewer and the school principal are separate people who have different visions. Make sure it is the same job description. Sometimes a teacher is offered a contract that does not sound like the job discussed during the interviews!

These few points are to keep in mind while we are busy generating hot leads.

Lose Weight!

"Make everything as simple as possible, but not simpler." – Albert Einstein

In the early days, we advocated expanded teaching portfolios. Those days are long gone. Now that everyone has unlimited capacity to produce unlimited amount of data, 7 out of 10 applications are seriously overweight. Editing has become an essential skill. Today, you can get ahead of the pack by trimming down your application.

Did you notice that many job ads plead: "Please send your statement of no more than 250 words"? Submit a "one-page resume" ? "Send your application as ONE PDF file"? In the age of Twitter slim is in.

Give them what they want and you receive what you want in return.

12 points for a winning inquiry

1. State your teaching area as the email subject, for example: French / Spanish.

Be clear about it. If you followed our suggestions on setting up your email address, your name will show automatically, no need to add it here. If the job includes an application code, enter it here, too. For example, *French / Spanish Joyjobs_18/7*

Failure to follow this simple rule kills more hopes than any other application mistakes.

2. Use crisp, muddle-free sentences.

Do not waste your time explaining how you found out about the school / job, and how great you are in the classroom. Get to the point right away: explain who you are, what you teach, and when you want to start. Ask for an interview. Resist the temptation to add more stuff.

Ask: "What job fairs are you attending? Is a Skype interview possible? Who should I contact about this application? When is the deadline for this position?"

*Avoid: "Can you go through my files and find a match for my qualifications?"
"Any ideas about my chances?"*

3. Ask for action

Do not beat about the bush. Looking for a job? Explain what you want. Need application forms? Ask for them. Don't know who to send your CV to? Ask about it!

Here's a sample:

Email subject: MS Social Studies and Spanish

To: Mr. William M. Lovell, Director - John F. Kennedy International School, Switzerland

Dear Mr. Lovell,

Please accept this letter as an application for a Spanish / Social Studies position at your school. My full CV, references, teaching philosophy and pictures are at <http://joyjobs.com/cv/la/levalle.htm>

For the past seven years, I have taught Social Studies and Spanish in Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic and Rochester, New York, USA.

In my most recent teaching position, as a Spanish-Latin Teacher for the Monroe Middle School Bilingual program, I provided instruction in Spanish and English. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss my qualifications with you personally or via Skype.

Please let me know if you expect an opening in MS Spanish or Social Studies for the upcoming school year.

Sincerely,

E. M. S.

4. Show confidence

Avoid words and phrases that convey weakness. Some of the samples are:

— Respected Sir, would you mind if I sent you my resume...

— I am sorry to bother you...

— Please excuse me for writing to you...

— I apologize for my long letter...

Recruiters look for teachers who are vigorous and assertive. Remember that they need your help to run the school. They don't look for needy people to be taken care of.

5. Make it easy to respond.

For an email, 250 words is the limit. Restrain yourself from the desire to submit your complete life story. Show respect and send only the essential information, directing the school to your webpage for more.

Sending massive applications is not only rude (you lay big claims on the

recruiter's time) but counterproductive. Directors already spend a few hours on their email every day. It is much easier for them to respond to a concise inquiry than to go through several paragraphs of detailed info just to figure it out what it is all about.

6. Include your webpage URL

E.g. Click on this link to view my photo, resume and references:
http://joyjobs.com/cvs/tooltips_sample.htm

7. Quash redundancy. Nothing tells the school that you are lazy than a copy of an application letter used also as a webpage. If you direct a school to a webpage, make sure it has something different from what you have written in your email.

8. Alleviate recruiter's uncertainties with YouTube.

Non-native speakers, teachers of foreign languages, newly qualified teachers as well as many other applicants will benefit from a YouTube clip that shows them in action.

9. Avoid self-accolades.

Praise is what your testimonials are for. In the application, use only facts. For example, you can say, "I am an experienced certified teacher" because your resume confirms it. Avoid "I am hardworking, loyal, well-read, enthusiastic, dedicated, etc." People may think you have a manic-narcissist personality.

10. Eliminate attachments. Never attach any files, unless explicitly requested by the school. Use your webpage instead of attachments.

11. Refrain from sending copies of the same letter.

Some people use vague language to send copies of the same email to many schools. For example, "I really like your website and your school sounds like a great match for my experience and qualifications." The problem is that vague messages sound like spam! (What website? What did you like about it? What did you like about the school? Why do you think your qualifications match?)

Schools ask in plain English, "***Explain why you want to work here and how you***

can contribute.” The shortest way to the recruiter is to be specific.

12. Follow directions. Many recruiters prefer to work in a particular way. If the job ad includes specific directions, follow them to the letter.

For example, if they give you a link and ask to apply online on their website, do not email your CV instead.

If they ask you to fax three referees - make sure it is three (not two or five) and the files are faxed, not emailed!

If they ask to send three letters of references, a CV and an application letter, do not tell them to download them from your Googledocs.

Personalize your Attachments

Schools may request additional information, such as scanned copies of documents, certificates, and so on. This is the only legitimate situation to send attachments.

My_resume.pdf is no good.

To distinguish your files from other candidates, use your last name to identify your files.

For example, **Johnson_Paul_Physics.pdf**

This will help the recruiter find your file quickly.

Technical Caveats

Most schools have a dedicated email address for collecting applications. It will respond with an automatic confirmation. It does not mean that your message has been read by a human being. Popular schools receive hundreds, sometimes thousands of inquiries, so a few follow-ups are usually necessary for a personal reply.

When you receive no personal reply, it could be three things:

- 📧 Your application was taken for spam and deleted automatically (nobody has seen it);
- 📧 It did not make it to the shortlist;
- 📧 Nobody has read it.

The latter is more common than many of us think. In fact, it happens all the time. Pay special attention to formatting your emails, especially its subject headers.

Use Blind Carbon Copy (BCC)

You cannot ever be certain that the mailbox listed on the website is active. To fight spam, schools change email addresses all the time. One option is to use the BCC function to send copies to other email addresses at the SAME school. (Never send copies of the same message to different schools!)

Checklist

1. Collect the school information.
2. Verify email addresses / fax numbers.
3. Send inquiries.
4. Follow up.

Speculative applications - the Concept of Active Research

Most international schools offer 2-3 year contracts. Which means that a large number of jobs re-open every year. Job circulation opens opportunities for speculative applications. Many new candidates do not know about it and wait for a particular vacancy to be announced. Or, register for job notifications. This often leaves them with the remainder of the initial job offers.

Speculative applications are so common that many schools never advertise their vacancies. With some certainty, you can estimate that your prospective school will have openings in your teaching area – as long as it is included in the school's curriculum.

With your webpage, you can apply easily to dozens of schools speculatively. This makes sense early in the recruiting season.

Line up your choice schools

Most candidates already have an idea where they would like to go. Make a list of your preferred locations and explore your options. Some countries will have a large number of schools, and some only a few.

To research your schools, use an online directory. Many websites collect this information, including Joyjobs. None of these directories is complete. Every one of them includes some schools that other directories do not list.

Directory 1 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_international_schools

Directory 2 <https://www.cois.org/page.cfm?p=1318>

Keep in mind that the international teaching market is in a perpetual motion. By the time of posting, a lot of data is already out of date. Just like teachers, school directors and principals are on fixed-term contracts. Their names and emails change continuously. So there is no way to avoid Google. And even that is not a guarantee because many schools do not update their pages regularly.

However, even a basic Google search can reveal quite a bit:

<https://www.google.com/search?q=American%2Binternational%2BSchool%2BHanoi>

<https://www.google.com/search?q=british%2BSchool%2Btokyo>

Organize your info

Do not store your information locally; keep everything in the Cloud - SkyDrive, DropBox, Evernote, Googledocs, Dashlane.

If you use a dedicated email account for your job search, your *SENT* folder will only have communication with the prospective schools. If you use the same email for everything, make separate folders for both *SENT* and *RECEIVED* job search communication.

Make a folder in your browser called ***SCHOOLS 1*** and start adding your top choice schools to it.

Make another folder for ***SCHOOLS 2***, for your second choice schools.

Start applying to your second tier schools.* Why second? Because most new applications need tweaks and improvements. Save your top schools for the second round, after you fine-tune your application package.

**If you are late in the recruiting season, contact your top schools right away!*

Your Winning Strategy

"Persistence. Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent." – Calvin Coolidge, President of the United States

Once started you must continue until you sign a contract. Leave your doubts behind.

Whatever the actual strategy will be it will include the following three stages:

- 🎬 **Generating leads**
- 🎬 **Arranging interviews**
- 🎬 **Winning job offers**

—Why do I need to communicate with the schools? Isn't it easier to go directly to a job fair?

There are two very important reasons why you must generate leads first: You need to discover the tentative vacancies before they are announced. Or before other candidates discover them. First come – first served.

Secondly, you will try to interview via Skype, and save yourself a good deal of money and stress by avoiding the job fairs altogether. The second point is vital, as you will find out in the next Step.

The pro-active speculative applications have substantial advantages:

You are not limited to the announced posts. You may be the first to learn about unexpected openings and tentative positions. You can influence the course of events, rather than simply react to them.

Surprisingly, the best offers go not to the best teachers but to those who are at the right spot at the right time. The more exposure you get the more chances you have. It is the numbers game that makes the difference when you deal with niched opportunities. Do not stop generating new leads!

There are two types of recruiters

1. Those who like recruiting;

2. Those who don't.

The first type welcome early requests, respond to your emails and will be willing to arrange interviews in advance. They like people and you will have no problem with them.

The second type will procrastinate as long as possible; they delegate part of their responsibilities to other administrators and/or prefer not to get involved at all. If your email /fax requests remained unanswered, chances are you are dealing with one of those. You have two options:

A. Persistent Pressure – keep bugging them until they surrender.

B. Ignore them and look elsewhere for now.

Some schools will not respond no matter what. There can be various reasons.

Be prepared for it and do not take it personally. Move on.

Follow ups

The schools that reviewed your initial message and requested more info are hot prospects. You should go after them aggressively.

Most of us feel uneasy about sending extra messages for the fear of appearing pushy. This is a legitimate concern, so avoid sending copies of the same message. However, responding with a few brief follow-up notes is appropriate. In fact, it is necessary to keep the ball rolling. One way to do it is to ask questions about the job, the school and recruitment process.

One question at a time

It is easy to respond to an email that has one question. So keep your emails short.

Everybody hates long emails with a list of questions. This is a sure way to sabotage your communication. At best, the director will simply send you to their website. At worst, you will be ignored.

Your goal is not so much information as communication. You want to warm up your contacts. Which is essential for the next stage, the interview. Do not try to hit the bull's eye with one shot. Play the game, have fun.

Show Commitment

"The difference between 'involvement' and 'commitment' is like an ham-and eggs breakfast: the chicken was 'involved' - the pig was 'committed'."—Unknown

By all means avoid acting as if you were just shopping around. Commitment is crucial. If you want the schools to take you seriously act like a serious candidate, not a window shopper.

Obviously, the other extreme is to look desperate.

Never, ever show any signs of desperation. This always cancels your candidacy. The ideal candidate is serious but cool and assertive.

Do not assume

You may be surprised if you compare the real people with the job announcements for the vacancies they filled. No school will ever say, *“We recruit unqualified candidates with mediocre teaching records who are mostly interested in exotic experiences rather than teaching.”*

In real life, however, all sorts of people get hired. If you are at the right place at the right time – you WILL get a job regardless of your qualifications. The point is, life is larger than print. Everything is relative and almost everything can be negotiated in some capacity.

Chaos vs Order

The world of international recruitment is a delicate balance of chaos and order. It is not uncommon for the chaos to prevail. Because of the extra time needed for visas and relocation the schools are always under pressure. Trying to beat the clock, a school may overbook the flight, so to speak, announcing more jobs than it will have.

A “firm” vacancy can be canceled at the last moment because of a sudden drop in enrollment. Likewise, many unexpected positions are posted due to cancellations, family matters, etc.

Don’t believe everything they say

Regardless of what a job post says, the real situation is usually different. “Paid airfare” can be a one way trip. “Free housing” can be a small, shared apartment. A “year” may be 10 months instead of 12. Do not assume anything.

Checklist

- As a result of your efforts, you should have several prospective schools wanting to interview you.
- The recruiters have a good idea about your professional skills and a positive opinion of you as a person.
- You have still more contacts in reserve.

- 🎬 You already have an advantage over your competitors, regardless of how well you interview.
- 🎬 Keep up the good work!

Next: Skype Interviews

Skype Interviews



Crash Course: Skype

By Pamela Campbell

In my international teaching career, I have had countless job interviews. It always used to be face to face, in person. Nowadays, many recruiters prefer Skype. And Skype interviewing is a very peculiar skill.

My most recent job search was conducted exclusively on Skype. No travel to job fairs, no standing in line for registration, no hotel rooms face to face with your potential director.

Instead, I had my laptop perched on a stack of books and a reading lamp pointed at the wall for a diffused lighting.

Here are some important observations that may be critical for your success.

If it can go wrong, it will.

Prepare for the unexpected. Unlike job fairs where everything is dictated by a strict timeline, online interviewers are not under any pressure.

The time set by the recruiter is only an estimate.

They might forget to add you.

They might be thinking that they had scheduled you for a different time.

They might be waiting under a different user name.

They might be waiting and never have added you!

They might have a power outage.

There is quite possibly no video from the recruiter's end or they will ask to turn

off the video for a better connection.

The initial interview might be simply to see if you speak English and can construct a coherent sentence!

All these things happened to me.

Stay focused!

As the person wanting a job, you cannot allow yourself to show distress or frustration.

It is in your best interest to be ready for the interview, now or whenever it comes and that requires mental preparation.

As the interviewee, you have to do everything correctly for your own peace of mind but don't be upset when the interviewer can't function properly (it happens more often than you can imagine!)

Anticipate the glitches and try not to be annoyed.

Anticipating the call on time is a natural response. I would get so pumped up and ready for the call, but then it would never come so I would sit and wait.

After fifteen minutes, I would begin to pace the floor, slowly losing steam and motivation. By the time the call came, in 25 minutes, or not at all, I would be a different person, no energy, feeling a bit defeated, etc.

What kind of advice to give about this? It does not help to get overly excited or agitated. It really worked against me. This will happen, so be prepared for it.

Send a note via Skype that you are ready and waiting, and send an email note as well.

The recruiter may not be logged into Skype. Send double messages to be sure the recruiter knows you are there.

This will tell the recruiter that you are available and there may be a problem with the connection.

Lighting is important, so make sure the people on the other end can see you.

Set up your computer beforehand so you are framed well in the screen. I was surprised by how many dull offices and fuzzy outlines I spoke with.

At least if you have proper lighting and a decent frame, you know you have done one thing right.

I propped my computer up on some books so I looked straight into the camera and pushed it back a bit so as not to be a gigantic head.

Check your settings with a call to a friend.

The Questions

"Tell us about yourself." This is not an old fashioned question at all. In fact, 75% of my interviews began with this question. With each interview, I became better at answering the question. Figure out in advance what you want to say. Having a firm and solid stock response will benefit you and set you up for a better interview.

Keep your answer short and simple. It is only there to break the ice, so they can hear your voice and open the conversation.

"What job have you applied for at this school and how did you get your start in that area?"

Investigate the school website and read their mission statement.

Try to work in something about yourself that fits their profile.

Echo their language, as they use in the job description. As you are applying for a specific job, refresh your professional knowledge and get the **key words** in the front of your brain.

Show enthusiasm for the subject area, a brief comment on why you love it.

Do not talk about your ideal childhood or what you studied before you became a teacher.

Best questions weren't questions at all, rather, "Let us tell you about the job."

I found it increasingly important to get the scoop on the actual work close to the beginning of the interview. You also have to assess the school and the position. You are, after all, the one that will have to do the work.

I found out at the end of a long interview that the job I had applied for was for 25 special needs 4th graders. I didn't get the job, but in the end, I was thankful as it would have been a massive responsibility to write 25 IEP's, in a school increasingly demanding in nature.

Ask for information close to the beginning of the interview. After you tell the school about yourself, ask them to detail the job a bit so you know where you are heading in the interview.

Worst opening question: *What reading assessments do you use?* This question took me off guard and I fumbled around as I wasn't prepared for it right off the bat. Ask yourself, what kind of school opens their interview with this type of question? This school never followed up with my interview.

Practice!

Over Skype it is very difficult to relax. But being nervous does not land jobs. Practice is essential. Set up a Skype with a friend and practice your answers. There are lists of questions to use. Begin to practice them.

What is your philosophy of education?

How do you manage discipline?

What assessments do you use?

Favorite resources.

Tell us about a success. About a failure.

Of course, you will be asked to speak about a weakness. Find something to talk

about. I was asked this question twice. Think about it and come up with something. It is better to have something to say.

Do not assume.

Do not invest emotional energy and do not move yourself there in your mind.

Several interviews I had I convinced myself it was my job not to lose. I knew, I just knew I had this one in the bag. I spent one entire Saturday, I mean hours of daylight, the entire day, researching a certain small African country, reading blogs, looking at maps, researching flights in and out of the country.

I found the nice spas, cooking classes and local attractions. However, once I began the interview, I realized within one minute that this was not the job for me.

I didn't like them particularly and they didn't like me. You have to have a modicum of report with the recruiter and sometimes there is not any at all!

Do not invest emotional energy and do not move yourself there in your mind.

I learned a lot about this small African country; however, this time could have been spent differently. In other words, a waste of time!

It is more worthwhile to research key words and phrases, and practicing.

Brush up your vocabulary.

Practice your answers and get the terminology in the forefront of your speech.

You have to find a way to show off what you can bring to the school. Shift your approach from your own preferences to the school's perspective.

For example, instead of saying, "I like to work with themes", say, "I am good at working with themes".

"I am good at," or "I am able to", or "I have experience in" are better than "I like", or "I prefer".

No Nuances!

Skype interviewing is language based, body language plays a minor role. Nuances do not exist.

Unlike a real conversation, Skype is awkward in a two-way communication

Keep calm and speak only when it is your turn. Do not utter anything while your interviewer is talking. (“Right”, “OK”, etc.) as the audio may break up.

Keep in mind that many schools are on a slow connection, so all technical issues will amplify.

Your Timeline.

Timing is something amazing. After the big recruiting fairs, the recruiters are looking for the top candidate who may not exist.

The **January/early February** fairs are for organized people. If you miss them, as I did, you will be applying helter-skelter for days on end. I applied every day for jobs and had haphazard interviews. Not the most productive approach.

Next time, I will wait to the end of the school year, when jobs come up again: **May.**

It is very difficult to wait it out, but that is my advice. It was hard work looking for work during this in-between time and very defeating.

Keep your chin up and carry on. Do not lose yourself in the process; as I said before it is defeating. I almost left teaching altogether because I was getting such a lack of response from recruiters. It is true that one negative comment can erase the good of thirty positive ones.

Most schools don't follow up on the interviews.

I had 20 Skype interviews and 4 schools followed up. If you have not made a

good first impression, you will be forgotten.

It is difficult to win back an awkward or bad interview so move on with your search. If the recruiter says, “*We are making a decision at the end of the month,*” you are most certainly not a candidate!

This job cycle I had roughly 20 interviews on Skype and each one was worse than the one before. It was only the final two interviews, when I knew I had the jobs, that I was able to really enjoy the conversations and have a real dialogue.

You are also shopping. Scrutinize the offer and school for your own good fit. In the end, I was offered two jobs, which I never would have thought possible in March.

Setup: Lighting is king

Unlike live interviews, where your wardrobe is critical, for Skype, it’s light and camera setup. Do not use your monitor as the light source. You are going to need a separate light, your desk lamp for example.

If you wear glasses, turn down the brightness of your monitor to eliminate the reflection. It is much nicer when people can actually see your eyes.

For a successful interview, it is important that your webpage /CV photo looks like you on Skype. The recruiter wants to see the same person. (Don't use dated images on your webpage!)



Declutter the background

Position yourself behind a bare wall, or at least clean up the background. A collapsible background is really helpful. For example, we use an old projection screen for slides.

Eliminate glare

Make sure there are no lights or windows behind you. Otherwise your camera will use them for exposure and color balance, which will screw up your image.

Turn down sharpness

Reduce sharpness to 2 or 3, for smoother skin tones.

Clothes

Don a white shirt. White does not cast any color hues onto your face. Your camera also needs a patch of white for a proper color balance. If you choose something else, avoid busy patterns. They cause moire and other problems. A plain gray, blue or black jacket with a white shirt will work great.

During the interview you may need to stand up to get something, so make sure your lower body is also appropriate.

Turn off your phones and lock the door.
You may need to post a note: *Do not disturb*

Look straight into the camera, especially when the other person is speaking. This simulates live eye-contact.

Sound-check

For Skype interviews, sound is even more important than the video. (If your webcam freezes but the sound works, you can still go on with the interview, just

like on the phone. But if it's your sound that breaks down, the interview is over!

Warm up

Call a friend and have a little chat just before the interview. You will also be able to verify your connection speed and sound quality.

Memorize your elevator speech

Get comfortable introducing yourself. And be ready to explain who you are and what you want to do, your one-minute profile (the elevator speech).

If you can't do that, you need to know that people who succeed - can.

Many candidates are horrified when they hear what they actually say at an interview. It feels like your mouth is out of control. It is very different from what they were rehearsing – in their minds. You must actually say what you want to say to find out if it is going to work.

“When you improvise, you’re supposed to be completely open and let it happen. That can be a real liability in an interview if you let whatever fly out of your mouth. In an interview, I just prefer to think before I speak.” Christine Heckman

If you can't explain that in lay terms, and make it interesting in two minutes or less, start practicing right now. Use your educational philosophy. You can actually repeat it with some adjustment for oral delivery. If it's a well-written piece, it will hit the target.

You must not sound like an answering machine of course but any actor knows that being natural requires practice.

The importance of being earnest

We discussed the importance of using authentic information in the chapter *Your Webpage Setup*. Here's why: the recruiter's goal is to find out how much of your application presentation is real, and how much of it is smoke and mirrors.

The recruiter uses the interview situation as a tool to assess your personality. The actual questions are, *"How real are you?"* and *"Can I trust you?"*

That's why the best policy is to remain honest. Only contextual adjustments are acceptable. In other words, certain things are required by the specific situation you are in. For example, your recruitment attire, your cover photo and so on. Interview questions are also part of this context.

To be convincing, your answers have to be based on the two keystones — your educational philosophy and your CV. The more convincing your Application Package — the easier your interview will be. The recruiter will only need to make sure that you look and act as the person portrayed in your AP.

The basic content of your marketing message remains the same. It is the presentation that must be adjusted according to the situation.

Active Interviewing

To boost your chances, practice **active interviewing**. Here is the scoop:

- 🎬 Appeal to the recruiter's ego.
- 🎬 Identify your personal strengths and focus on them.
- 🎬 Develop techniques to address your weak areas.
- 🎬 Use questions as an opportunity to deliver your message.
- 🎬 Rehearse your responses to build confidence.
- 🎬 Before you connect, learn some facts about the school and country and jot them down.

During the interview, it's your job to evaluate the director and her performance. If you sense that something is funny, it's probably a good idea to keep looking.

Let's Skype!

Because of the geographical distance between you and your prospective school, make sure the time is convenient for you. Do not allow them to catch you off guard.

The recruiter will be looking at your CV as he makes his call. Have the same paperwork right in front of you as well.

Keep your list of questions at hand. Without one, you will most likely forget to ask them.

When the interview starts

If you are nervous, explain that it's your first Skype interview. Most recruiters will understand that. It also helps break the ice.

Some situations may be more comfortable than others. Occasionally, the recruiter does not seem to know how to conduct an interview. This may happen when there is a considerable age difference, for example, a young recruiter interviewing an older teaching couple. A friendly comment or a joke will be very handy to ease the initial tension.

Listen carefully to what is being said

Every recruiter has a set of key questions. The questions differ depending on the recruiter's personal approach which they have developed over the years. It is essential to fully comprehend the question before you start answering it. Missing the point of the question is a big red flag. If you are not sure, ask for clarification. Most people appreciate your effort to answer with clarity.

Be brief!

Some people take half the time of the interview covering everything from the roots of their family trees to their recent enrollment in a weight-loss program. Not a good idea. You are only beginning to establish a rapport. Give your director an opportunity to take the bait and ask the questions you want him to ask, for which you have prepared great answers and examples. It sounds a lot more natural this way and you engage the director in a dialogue.

Make sure to ask questions

Your questions will reveal your understanding and show your interest. Lack of questions from the applicant is always taken in a negative way. It is very easy to

reverse the whole interview by starting to ask questions about the school.

Every interview is a two-way process

You evaluate your director just as she evaluates you. It is quite possible that your impression of the interviewer will not be flattering. In fact, the main reason why many candidates attend expensive job fairs is to have this personal contact: you want to make sure that he or she is the right individual to be your director for the next few years.

Take notes

This will show the recruiter that you take their information seriously. You will also need your notes for your post-interview email. Reiterate some of the points to make sure you understand everything correctly.

The Questions

The list of questions is included in the Appendix. Keep in mind that there is no right or wrong answers — there are only opinions.

Most recruiters have a couple favorite questions. Likewise, a lot of successful candidates have their preferred marketing message, which has worked for them in the past. The interview is essentially finding a common ground between the two, usually in an informal way.

Although the number of potential questions can be very big, there is no need to prepare for every possible question. Your mind will be doing the analytical work as you simply go through them. When the moment comes you will be able to respond quickly and spontaneously.

If the question is unclear to you, don't be afraid to ask the director to repeat it. Sometimes the interviewer asks an ambiguous question. The director may be unprepared for the interview.

Your ability not to rush will be noted as good thinking. Don't be intimidated by the number of questions listed below. You will be asked only a few. Remember that if your AP is good your interview will be relatively easy.

Look for the keywords in the question — as a rule, many questions can have a very similar answer. For example, the first four questions in the Appendix can be answered with basically the same response.

The interviewer is likely to skip the other questions in the same category if your first responses are strong and consistent.

If your application package is strong (or the school is desperate), the recruiter will be spending her time on selling you the school, primarily.

How to recover from a mistake

What to do if you realize you just made a big snafu? For example, your mind went blank all of a sudden. Or you answered the wrong question... or dropped the F-bomb? Suddenly you are in recovery mode, scrambling to resurrect an interview gone awry.

Do not be afraid to take a deep breath and admit that you have made a mistake. Once you admit your error, you are less likely to fixate on it during the rest of the interview.

If you feel as if you have flubbed the interview, go out of your way to be considerate in the follow-up. Write a thank-you note outlining specific points you hope they took away about why you would be a great match for their school. Do not just slink away in shame if you have blown it. Go overboard to re-establish your professionalism.

In fact, it's good practice to email a follow up message with a few additions to the subjects you discussed. You may even point to a related article or a webpage. Interviewers are more forgiving than you might think. Nobody is perfect, including your competition. In most cases, there is still hope.

Let the director lead the interview, do not try to speed it up. If more than one person is present on the other side, you can expect a longer interview. We have spoken to a school director who was interviewed by a school board for 2 hours straight (she got the job).

When the interview is over, thank the director for her time and confirm your

interest in the job.

Disconnect from Skype

Make sure you are indeed off line, before you say / do anything in front of your camera. Don't say, "*Gees, what a bunch of idiots!*" The connection may still be live and your careless remark will be transmitted. This has happened even to professionals.

Next: Job Fairs

Job Fairs



“Ultimately we know deeply that the other side of every fear is a freedom.” — Marilyn Ferguson.

No matter how much you spend on preparation, an international job conference is intimidating. There is risk. You face the unknown. It makes all people uneasy, even if they have attended many such events in the past. In 48 hours you may be going home with a contract. It could be in a country you have never heard of before. Moreover, the job fair will determine your life for the next 2 years, usually even more. And there is no more time to contemplate. You must get a job NOW! That is why everyone feels an enormous pressure. Many new candidates ask, "Do I have to attend a job fair?" The answer is no. You can be interviewed and recruited via Skype. However, job fairs and live interviews have their advantages. Specifically, you are in a much better position to evaluate the director as a person. As we stressed earlier, you gauge schools and directors in the same capacity as they do you.

I live in Tennessee, and there seems no international fair in Chattanooga. I do not want to travel to Philadelphia!

For a new candidate, the idea of traveling to a different city for a job interview may seem excessive. For an international job fair, the participants will be arriving from many different countries and continents. From their viewpoint, your reluctance to travel within the USA or UK is ludicrous. To put it in perspective, for our last job fair we flew from Tokyo to London. Which is a 12 hour flight over 8 time zones. And then back! In fact, your competition will only be happy if you stay at home! (Those who landed international jobs 2-3 years ago and are now back in the loop - interviewing for a new contract.) Understandably, most of us are uncomfortable with the thought of a possible failure. But there is no way to win without a certain amount of risk. The good news is that if you followed the previous steps you must have a few hot leads by this time. This reduces your risks. You are in a much stronger position than those who BEGIN their job search by going to a recruiting conference. What if you got in the game too late? What if there is no time to go through the previous steps? What if you have to go to a fair tomorrow? Yes, this happens. Read this guide and make notes. It covers every aspect of attending an international recruiting conference.

The Types of Recruitment Fairs

A recruiting fair may look like a chaotic event, filled with spontaneous experiences. However, there is some method to this chaos. In this step, we will show you the hidden sandbars, invisible streams and safe passages to overseas contracts. There are two types: selective recruitment fairs and non-selective ones. Selective recruiting fairs are organized by professional recruiting organizations, such as CIS, ISS and Search Associates. To make the short recruiting conferences most effective they pre-screen candidates according to the schools' requirements. Only those who meet the formal requirements are invited to participate. The non-selective fairs are organized by universities. They are generally open to anyone, as long as they meet the minimal requirements and pay the attendance fee. In a similar vein, some fairs charge registration and placement fees (e.g. Search), while others are free to attend (CIS.)

Making the paper cut

School directors do not go half way around the globe in order to interview candidates that have no chances of being hired. They rely on the recruiting

agencies to get rid of the dead weight. To be accepted, an undergraduate degree, license to teach in a state or province, and 2 years of teaching experience are usually required. A special emphasis is on references: reliability is critical. People who break contracts are blacklisted for future recruitment. Being emotionally stable, resourceful and tolerant are also valuable commodities, as well as having a sense of adventure and a good sense of humor.

If you do not meet the formal requirements

Trying to persuade the organizers to waive some of the requirements is usually a waste of time. Move on! Many schools do not attend job fairs. Direct recruitment is a viable alternative. Use your webpage to apply, and interview via Skype.

The Heavyweight Players

The major placement agencies that dominate the overseas educational market are:

- 🎬 Council of International Schools, CIS
- 🎬 International School Services , ISS
- 🎬 University of Northern Iowa, UNI
- 🎬 Search Associates
- 🎬 Association of American Schools in South America, AASSA
- 🎬 Queens University, TORF

These are the most reputable recruiting organizations, with many years of experience in the field of overseas recruitment services. International schools use one or more of the above organizations to hire teachers and administrators. There are some specifics. The UNI recruitment fair is the largest, while Search has the largest number of fairs in more countries of the world, with the focus on administrative jobs and personal attention. For the current recruitment schedules

please go to the Events section of the Members' Area. Below is an overview of all major recruiting organizations.

Council of International Schools (CIS)

When: January — May. Where: The London fair in January is the gala event (100 schools), followed by a series of much smaller recruiting conferences in various parts of the world. Advantages: Free to attend (no registration / placement fees). Great variety of schools at the London fair, European recruiters. For Skype interviews, recruiters have access to your file all year round. Disadvantages: Few employment options after the London fair. Spring events can be canceled if too few schools sign up. Remote for those outside of Europe. How to apply: <http://www.cois.org/> (Teacher Recruitment on the top bar.)

The University of Northern Iowa

The oldest of international recruiting fairs attracts large numbers of schools and candidates from all over the world. Excellent chances of landing a job. Brace yourself for crowds. When: February Where: Cedar Falls, Iowa USA Advantages: Popular fair, good representation of schools. Disadvantages: Crowds, sometimes a chaotic atmosphere, registration fees

Single Teacher: US\$150.00

Teaching Teams: US\$270.00 (must be married by the time of the fair, both certified)

How to apply: <http://www.uni.edu/placement/overseas/>

International Schools Services (ISS)

When: To compete with the popular AASSA fair, the ISS is offering the same location in December, in addition to the regular events in January through May Where: USA; Europe and South East Asia Advantages: New teachers accepted. Established professional recruiting agency (over 55 years.) Regular summer fair

in June. Disadvantages: US\$195.00 How to apply: <http://www.iss.edu/>



Search Associates

When: Variable throughout the year Where: Multiple locations around the world including USA, Canada and UK. Advantages: Search markets itself as a “personalized” recruiting agency, although your experience will vary greatly. Fairs held regularly in various parts of the world. Custom services for Canadian, Australian, NZ teachers. Easy online application. Intern programs. Disadvantages: Most expensive, US\$225.00. Search is somewhat picky about qualifications. How to apply: <http://www.searchassociates.com/>



The Association of American Schools in South America (AASSA)

When: December Where: Atlanta, Georgia USA Advantages: Regional fair for those interested in Latin America. Less picky requirements. ASSAA is the only organization that offers a small number of teaching jobs in USA for non-US teachers. Disadvantages: US\$110.00 registration, limited locations, children and other dependents are not welcome. Remote if you are not in North America. How to apply: <http://www.aassa.com>



Queen's University Faculty of Education

Teachers' Overseas Recruiting Fair (TORF) When: January or February. Where: Kingston, Ontario Canada. Advantages: Continuing placement service for those who do not land jobs at the fair, new teachers accepted. Disadvantages: \$125.00 registration, limited choice of schools, only one location. How to apply: <http://educ.queensu.ca/services/careers/international.html>

Which Fair?

How do you decide which fair to attend? This is one of the most frequent questions we receive. Typically, you choose either the nearest one, or you go after a particular choice of schools. For example, if you teach in South East Asia, you would probably prefer Bangkok to London. You may still opt for London, if

your choice schools are all attending a UK fair. If you have done your homework you should already have a few prospective schools on your hot list. Look at their fair list to decide. The biggest problem with remote fairs is jet lag. East coast USA / London UK seems like no big deal, but crossing from Japan or Hong Kong into Europe is 8 time zones! So we suggest you first check what is available near you. Chances are, Search will have a fair in your neck of the wood. Most directors attend a series of three or four of job fairs held over subsequent weekends. In other words, you will have several opportunities to interview with the same school during the season. Why is it important? Because it gives you the flexibility to plan your actions. If your prospects suggest you go to a particular recruiting fair – do so! Typically, if you start your search early the director will suggest that you meet at the earliest fair. It is good for the recruiter and it is good for you, too.

New candidates and perfectionists

The idea of teaching abroad may pop up at any time of the year. In the old days we had a more rigid structure, with a fairly stable recruitment pattern. Today, there is a serious drain towards online recruitment so the significance of job fairs is less obvious. Because of the continuous online recruitment, many teachers feel tempted to renege on their contracts (signed at an early job fair), if they spot a better offer.

Last-minute cancellations, for whatever reason (illness, family matters, etc.) generate a substantial number of vacancies late in the season, after the job fairs are over. These urgent vacancies are posted online, with the interviews done via Skype.

Since these jobs need to be filled quickly, the competition for them is less significant, compared to the job fair recruitment where these positions were originally offered. As a result, less-qualified candidates and slow-pokes may end up with better contracts, compared to those who attend the regular recruiting fairs. (On the other hand, many procrastinators end up with nothing!)

In other words, today we have less stability and more variables. It means more opportunity but less security. Trying to zero in on a "perfect" recruiting event is an impossible enterprise.

We are considering ISS and CIS but we read that only 40% of the people at ISS get jobs.

Stats are more or less the same for all recruiters, because they compete against each other. Many of those who do not get job offers on the spot are hired later, as the season goes on. If a school fails to find an “ideal” candidate (which is common) the director will follow up on the candidates they interviewed earlier. If you are still available, you can finalize a contract over Skype.

Every year many schools discover that they underestimated their enrollment and they need to fill a vacancy quickly – sometimes as late as August. Finally, once you have established a file with a recruiting agency, CIS for example, it will try to “sell” you even after the recruiting fairs are over.

Log on to our website to view the list of current recruiting fairs.

<http://joyjobs.com/members/events/> Look through the list of upcoming fairs and fair dates along with the application materials and choose the fair most convenient to you in regard to time, location and size of fair.

The early fairs attract a large number of teaching teams, who typically receive strong consideration due to the costs of relocation and housing. Single applicants, particularly those who have yet to teach overseas have better chances attending the second round (spring - summer).

Specialized teaching teams will find it increasingly difficult to find schools with openings matching both their fields of expertise in the second round. If you are a going abroad as a teaching couple attending a late fair is not productive. Although there may be positions for both of you, they are not likely to be in the same location.

Teaching couples tend to attend the earliest recruiting events. This is because the schools are most flexible early in the season. As the vacancies get filled it is more difficult to find matching jobs for both of you.

At the same time, single candidates, or those with limited teaching experience or no overseas experience find a greater number of interviewing opportunities later in the recruiting season. At this time, schools are more receptive, regardless of what the school job ad originally said. As the time goes on – and the openings remain, the directors get less and less selective.

After the scheduled fairs are over the remaining schools will hire virtually anyone, usually after a Skype interview. The other type of openings that get filled in a speedy manner are unexpected and emergency jobs that occur when a contracted teacher is unable to report to work or the school has a sudden increase in the student population. Every summer, some older teachers choose not to report back to work after a vacation. These jobs must be filled immediately so the schools are most accommodating.

Should I go to just one fair or more?

One fair should be enough. However, there can be circumstances that dictate otherwise. For example, a recruiter is leaning towards you but she is indecisive. You may be asked, “Are you going to be at such and such fair?” meaning that she would like to have one more interview with you. Attending another job fair is definitely an option for those who have time and money, otherwise, do not bother. Follow up on Skype.

Surviving the fair

It's not a good idea to combine the job of a recruitment fair with a tourist journey. Looking for work must be the one and only purpose of your trip.

The Hotel

The recruiting conference will be held at a hotel. If you can afford it, stay at this hotel; invest in yourself, it will be well worth the price. Most fairs arrange roommates for singles. Or look for a nearby hotel or stay with friends, being sure to work out the details of transportation ahead of time. There is a certain convenience of being right there on the spot; weigh your options and see what is going to work for you. Teaching candidates should plan to arrive the day before or the day of registration. Candidate check-in is held from 8:00 am to 6:30 p.m. There may be an orientation meeting that starts around 7:00 p.m. As you arrive, follow signs to the recruiting fair registration room, or ask the desk for directions. A fair representative will register you. You will receive an info packet including last minute changes and instructions. Take your time and explore the

hotel. There should be a map included in your registration packet. You will need to be able to find your interviewers' rooms the next day. There will be a dedicated room for candidates that contains information on all attending schools, vacancies, and compensation programs.

Share the cost

If you are single share the cost of a double room. You can also post a message to our message board to arrange it in advance. The recruiters are staying at the same hotel and the interviews will be held in their rooms. As soon as you enter the airport to leave for the conference, you must become a professional. There will be candidates and employers all over town. Be on your toes everywhere you go. Don't play loud music or turn up the volume on your television; your neighbor could be your future director. The fair begins with an orientation session. The organizers will give you some updated information plus last minute advice. Because every job fair is different, listen to what they say carefully. If you followed our guidelines and established relationships with certain schools, let your contacts know that you have arrived and are ready for a face-to-face meeting. Send a note (you may also attach your CV/picture to it) to your prospects. Try to claim your time BEFORE the official sign-up procedure begins. If you don't do it in advance, there are fewer chances you can do it in the chaos of the sign-up session. You have to get your man before he has a bunch of other candidates on his schedule! The majority of your competition will be elbowing their way to the recruiters desks the next morning and the chaos kicks in, big time.

The Night Before

Examine your clothing for stains, wrinkles, and shoes for scuffs. Set your alarm. Get a good night's sleep.

Day One

The first full day will be for registration. The two hour sign-up period is on Friday. Check in and retrieve your packet. Inside the registration room, there will be two sets of file folders: one for the schools and one for the candidates, a mailbox system in alphabetical order. Check your folder often. The fair will have a lounge established for candidates opened all day.

After registration, go back into the database and check your options. The recruiters attend a long string of recruits and of course, they are going to find candidates along the way. Do not be devastated if the jobs you have been interested in are no longer posted. Systematically go through the database once more, checking for deletions as well as additions. The folders are your first opportunity to introduce yourself to the school recruiter. Keep your initial contact short, sweet and absolutely typo free. Use simple, perhaps monogrammed, letter/note/cards addressed to the actual recruiter (by name and school), restating your interest in the school, and sign it.

Your file: some deadly errors

Typos: Make certain that there is not a single typo anywhere within three miles of your documentation. It does not matter what position you seek. Find two or three other sets of eyes to read over your materials because a TYPO could mean certain death to your resume and your hopes of teaching overseas (especially at this school). It sounds harsh but it's just that simple. Spell check will pass over certain combinations such as "an" instead of "and." Penciling in a "d" at the zero hour will likely not get you an interview.

A typo, no matter how innocent, allows you a front row seat in the bottom of the trash can. This is the first screening of a professional. At the last fair a friend was recruiting for her school. Here are her comments as she collected materials from her folder: *"And she wants to be a Principal? I have too many other people interested in the position. No."*

Three documents, the resume, cover letter and business card, all stapled together: *"How am I supposed to read this with the business card stapled across the front? She wants me to pick the staple off? This candidate obviously came unprepared."*

Think it through before you drop something in the recruiter's box! Seriously, these recruiters are busy, stressed out, jet lagged individuals. Think it through and make their job easier for them.

Wrong format: Using an entire sheet of paper when you only write across the top looks awkward, but likewise, don't rip it in half. Find some simple, elegant cards with envelopes. The letter was perfectly written, only the format was ugly.

The writing looked really tiny on the big sheet of paper, giving the impression of insecurity. Likewise, using the sheets of white paper provided by the fair is just not professional enough.

"This isn't even addressed to me! They probably prepared two dozen to place in school boxes. So, now it's my responsibility to haul around? They should save their documents for an actual interview."

Overkill: A few candidates created extensive binders of their documents. There was an impersonal form letter addressed to "Dear Sir/Madam" accompanying them. This is unnecessary as all your documentation is online. At this point, the recruiter only needs to know that you remain interested in the posted position. *"All she did was cut and paste the information from the web site. Why wouldn't I just look on the web site? This looks really awful."*

The Two Hour Sign Up

For two hours the next morning, you will have the opportunity to greet the school heads face to face. Leave everything behind except for your sign up sheet and keep yourself light. Some venues will have more space than others, the Hyatt was very spacious and accommodating.

The recruiters will be in their traditional alphabetical order. Find your target schools and present yourself. Eye contact is as essential as a strong handshake. Introduce yourself calmly and present your credentials.

Steel yourself for rejection, because NOT EVERY school is going to be a match, and honestly most of them won't be. Going into the sign-up, know your game plan. Check your mail folder in case you have any morning requests for interviews and good luck.

During these two hours you have the opportunity to approach as many or as few of the recruiters as you please. You have done your research and should have a good idea of what is available and what you want.

The available jobs are posted on signs behind their desks and there really isn't anything secret about the process. But, by all means, make eye contact, establish your credibility.

Project confidence

These two hours on Friday will dictate your entire weekend, and possibly the next few years! Your CV with a photo attached and your sign-up sheet is all you should need. There is the possibility of meeting with a director in an elevator or at breakfast but don't count on it. During your entire stay, be careful about what you say. Your interviewers can be anybody in the lobby.

Prioritize

Make a list of the top five schools you would like to interview with and write them out clearly on a piece of paper. It is a must if you didn't make any preliminary contacts. Without a list, you are likely to get lost in the hectic atmosphere of the fair. You need a rudder! Keep this document handy during Friday's registration.

Meanwhile, the recruiters have dossiers on all the teachers attending the fair. There is a file system for candidates and recruiters in the lobby where they can post notices should they wish you to schedule an interview with them. Login to your account frequently before Friday morning and just before the fair begins.

Recruiters arrive two days prior to the candidates for reviewing files and short listing. If you have done your homework, you should have a few schools interested already.

Seek out the schools that requested you. You will have their interview request in your hand and can move to the front of their queue. They will fit you into their interviewing schedule.

Meet the recruiters

The recruiters will be seated alphabetically around one or several rooms. The purpose of the sign-up session is for them to meet potential teachers and to schedule interviews with those they would like to interview during the weekend.

Be sure to read the signs posted above the recruiter's tables. The signs will list any last-minute changes not noted in your information packet and should clearly announce the vacancies being sought so you don't unnecessarily stand in a line

where there is ultimately nothing for you to apply for.

Some vacancies will change during the course of the fair. Some people will complain that the vacancies disappear before anyone could interview for them. This is because some candidates use our methods to apply directly. Otherwise, prepare for the following: *“I've stood in these lines and it's heartbreaking to lose 20 minutes of your 120 standing at a dead end. You are also bound to be disappointed by the updated news appearing on one of these notice boards, but again, it's better to know there is no job offering before losing the time in line which could be spent elsewhere.”*

Do not get lost!

There will be long lines with many people waiting in them. Try to make sense of the alphabetical arrangement and make your way to the top school on your list to try to schedule an interview.

You may feel like you are standing in a sea of piranhas, after all, these people are your competition.” The irony is that everyone is feeling awkward, so you might take this uncomfortable situation and attempt to talk with the candidates around you while waiting. Discuss the crowds with them. Tell someone they look nice; discuss the schools, the weather, whatever helps to relieve some of the stress.

Wish your competition good luck. People don't expect that and your friendliness will make a good impression. Most importantly, you are going to feel better.

Retain your sense of self. We have known too many people who couldn't stand the pressure of the signup who consequently spent a lost weekend. A fellow teacher spent his savings only to score one interview, no job and much personal humiliation.

If you aren't able to withstand the pressure, find another means of securing an overseas post.

Be the first in line

Often there are many applicants for a given school and by the time you get to the front of the line there are no interviewing time slots left for your specialty. For

example, the school will only be interviewing 10 elementary and 10 secondary positions to leave room for second interviews. If you have no preliminary arrangement with the school there is little to do to control this other than to be first in line.

Upon leaving the "A" section I passed a lonely recruiter representing Sofia, Bulgaria in the "B's". He was a bearded, pleasant looking man and his sign read that he was looking for several elementary teachers. I stopped to introduce myself and scheduled an interview. Later, when asked how on earth I ended up teaching in Bulgaria, I could laugh and say there wasn't anyone else standing in the line.

Candidates start to arrive at 7.30 AM

Schedule as many interviews as possible. Once you get to the front of the line, it is absolutely, positively essential to make eye contact with the interviewer and introduce yourself clearly and calmly. Do not discuss the crowds or complain about the facilities!

The interviewer will make a quick decision about whether to schedule an interview with you or not. He or she may ask for a bit more information or to see your resume. Be calm, attentive and confident. Do not waste this person's or your own time. Schedule an interview and move on to your next priority on your school list.

Remain positive and focused

Keep your eyes open; you never know when the opportunity may knock! The interviews are scheduled in half-hour blocks. Try to schedule your interviews as close together as possible to keep the momentum going but with enough time to get from one room to the other.

Give yourself a solid break to leave the hotel for some fresh air. There might be a second sign-up on Saturday afternoon, should you wish to take advantage of it.

Go to the presentations

Try to attend the presentations given by overseas schools throughout the day, although it may be difficult, as your appointments will overlap. Go to every presentation you have time for, even though you may not be specifically interested in these schools. These sessions are very informative and you will

learn a lot.

Attend the reception

By all means, go to the party or reception that is part of most recruiting fairs. Teaching overseas includes a lot of socializing, and the recruiters want to know how you can handle it. Dress with style, on the conservative side. And, by all means, don't drink too much.

Recognize encounters as opportunities

“During my disaster recruiting weekend, I sat at breakfast on Saturday morning with a director from a very small school in Mexico. As this was London, a full English breakfast was included in the price of the room and as we were both alone, we were seated next to one another at a booth. She was upset that very few candidates had signed up with her on Friday. I said that I would be interested in hearing about her school. She talked at length about the fabulous students and families there, the excellent conditions, etc. and I replied that I would be interested in interviewing with her as long as I didn't have to teach Kindergarten. Whoops! The vacancy she was trying to fill was for a class of seven kindergartners. There's no looking back after a mistake like that. For me, a class of many 5-year olds would be torture, but a class of 7 or 8 could be a very pleasant experience.” —Teacher

Cancel the appointments you can't keep

Most recruiters will have spoken to enough people by the end of the second day that few new interviews are scheduled for the third except for 2nd or even 3rd repeat interviews. After the sign-up, the recruiters will return to their rooms to keep the appointments they made. If you signed up for more interviews than you can handle, email to cancel the appointments you can't keep.

You might see the recruiters personally in the hotel and apologize to them. It is terribly unprofessional to alter your own or the recruiter's interviewing schedules. Be fair and reasonable. Likewise, leave a polite note if you have accepted a contract with another school.

Prepare to Make a Killer Impression!

The initial impression you make on the interviewer creates a presumption in his or her mind that has a strong effect on the rest of the interview. He or she looks

at you and will react with an opinion derived from your appearance. How you are dressed will make up 80 percent of this opinion because it is formed before you open your mouth.

Find something you feel good wearing

We have all heard that the "clothes make the man." While this might not be true in an interview, the way in which you dress will certainly have an effect on the interviewer's initial impression of you. Don't even think about sneakers, T-shirts or baseball caps — you'll be dismissed as déclassé. Sorry, folks, there is no way to work around this issue.

You must look good. Period. You don't have to look beautiful, just look professional. Clean, sharp classic lines are best. A sharp professional dress or simple suit with the skirt at the knee or below, or trousers and a jacket would be most appropriate.

Women: Bring several pairs of hose. *"In my excitement, I stuck my hand completely through a new pair of hose and spent the morning hoping the hole wouldn't run down my ankle before I had the opportunity to fetch a new pair."* The same is true if you wear glasses. Have a spare pair with you.

Men should wear a suit or a long-sleeved shirt and tie. Prepare a pressed shirt, preferably white or light blue/gray/beige without pattern and socks that match (never wear white socks). It is most professional to wear long sleeves even in the heat.

Men should wear ties even if the recruiters do not. Shoes should be traditional, in good condition.

Reagan's secret

When asked how he managed to remain robust until late in the day, Ronald Reagan said, "Change your shoes." As it turns out, it does work. Bring two pair of shoes to change into in the afternoon. It helps you feel fresh all day long.

Before the interview check your appearance to reaffirm that everything is in its proper place and take a deep breath. You've come a long way for this moment

and have planned for a long time.

How to cope with nervousness

If your nerves get on top of you, it can affect your performance.

Distract yourself

Once you've got yourself as ready as you can be, don't become obsessive. A surefire way to deal with nerves is to distract yourself. Phone a friend, do something you enjoy to take your mind off what's to come.

Don't worry that you're not actively preparing - your mind will go on busily processing all the data you need for the big occasion.

Get a good night's sleep

Turning in unusually early is unlikely to help - you'll end up restlessly awake, with your mind racing. Get some physical exercise to tire your body out. A hot bath, a cheese sandwich and a glass of milk, a few drops of lavender, listening to some relaxing music or a relaxation recording... all are tried-and-tested ways of calming the mind and helping you switch off.

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, and fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others." - Marianne Williamson

The next three days are devoted to interviews

In the morning... The venue will be buzzing with excitement! Breathe it in! The interviews range from formal to informal, depending on the style of the interviewer. It is advisable to prepare for both!

The initial interviews are for one half hour during which time the recruiter wants to speak with you about your education and background, asking the

basic questions that establish you as a viable candidate.

Save your portfolio or any heavy binders for a later interview, if ever. It is an important individual step for you to go through as a candidate, but don't assume that the recruiter's will want to flip through it. It is far more important to be prepared for the oral interview.

The majority of candidates will have from two to eight interviews, (UNI reports 6 on average) but the number of interviews varies depending upon teaching fields, interest and flexibility for considering positions in several geographic areas, and experience and qualifications compared with other candidates.

Don't even think about letting down

Stand up straight and tall. Don't burden yourself standing in line with a laptop, handbag or any other unnecessary items you would have to carry around with you.

Shake hands properly

Practice shaking hands with friends and family members. One or two shakes. A firm and open handshake is a crucial first impression at a job interview although a more lukewarm European style handshake is also common.

Your handshake, as well as your body language throughout the interview, should project professionalism and confidence.

Your Identity Hook

If the recruiter remembers your name you will have automatic credibility, so give him a tool that will help him. Wearing a name tag is compulsory. If your name is unusual, offer a brief explanation of its origin. If it is hard to pronounce, come up with a help word. In other words, find a way to mention your name a couple times.

Don't be bashful

As the interviews are held in the hotel rooms where the directors are sleeping,

you will probably be motioned to a chair, which is where you should sit. For the duration of the interview the room is an office, not a private chamber. Act accordingly, that is by being respectful but not shy. You will probably have a briefcase or an iPad. You can put it on the floor but it will be better if you find room on the table to place your portfolio. Don't use it to build a barricade, though.

It is written that the interviewer will form his/her opinion of you within the first 15-30 seconds! Relax! You know you look good. Now there is nothing to worry about except what comes out of your mouth! You now have one-half hour to convince the interviewer that you are the right candidate for his school.

Proceed with confidence

Once you are seated, sit comfortably with a straight back and good posture. There are usually a few minutes of friendly banter before the real interview begins, use this time to find a common ground or just to become comfortable with one another. Establish good rapport with your interviewer. At the very least smile and look like you enjoy being there.

“Most people think of small talk as inconsequential, unimportant and a waste of time but it is really the opposite,” says Randi Freidig, a speaker and trainer in Seattle.

Think about what you are going to say — both the questions you will ask and the answers you will give. Sports, weather, recent events are good conversation starters.

The best way to survive the interviews is to be prepared for the questions that are likely to be asked. Be confident in your answers but not cocky.

Don't over talk an answer because it could cost you the job. Be punctual for the interview. Often hotel rooms in big complexes are difficult to find. Give it a dry run if you are not sure. A fellow candidate may be exiting as you enter. Don't panic. Greet him or her. Make eye contact with the interviewer, smile and greet him/her.

Next: Interviews / Job Offers

Interviews / job offers



"It is dangerous to be sincere unless you are also stupid. " —George Bernard Shaw

Face-to-face interviews at job fairs

You are doing great if you have gone as far as a job interview. Now, do not screw up everything at the last moment. Some candidates think, *"I have a lot of experience, excellent qualifications and great references. This is all I need to get this job."*

WRONG!

In the recruiter's own words:

"You might think you are smart and can talk your way into a job, but don't believe it for a minute. I'm making a snap judgment on your character. Do you get right to the point or do you beat around the bush? What I'm basically going to do is ask you a couple of questions - be honest and straight. I know you are going to be nervous, so don't worry about that. "

Recruiters are human and like all of us, they can be manipulated - despite what they say. In fact, it happens all the time. This is not the point, however.

The point is that face-to-face job interviews are about personalities in the same capacity as they are about formal qualifications.

The interviewer, usually the director of the school, is looking not only for professional educators. He is also looking for people who won't be a problem to get along with for the next two or three years. It is also in your best interest to be hired by a director who is close to your own personal likes and dislikes.

Some directors place the personality factor above all the others when they make a recruiting decision. Here's a sample of a real discussion.

Director (looking at the pictures of the candidates he had interviewed):

— This one is a good teacher but she is too aggressive. We already have two bossy teachers and we don't need another.

— This guy is great but he is American. We have too many Americans and Canadians; for this job, we need a Brit.

Being bossy and inflexible as well as shy and insecure may ground your application regardless of your qualifications. A well-rounded teacher who makes a good impression at an interview has more chances than an experienced professional who lacks “likability.”

Most recruiting decisions are truly emotional. If they like you, the job is yours! Even if the other circumstances stack up against you (dependents, no experience, etc.).

While Skype tends to be information-oriented, a live interview is more like a friendly banter about general topics of teaching and living overseas.

The director will try to determine what kind of PERSON you are, your VOICE, GESTURES, FACIAL EXPRESSIONS are extremely important as they determine if there are any “vibes” between you and the recruiter.

Dos and Don'ts

Set the direction with a one-minute profile

You won't believe how many people go to a job interview without the slightest idea about what they are going to say about themselves. You have to do it from scratch and within a limited period. Your answer has to be compressed. You absolutely must have a strong one-minute profile, as this is the essence of the whole interview.

When challenged with these limitations, many candidates stumble on what they believe is the easiest question, **"Tell me about yourself."** A lot of interviews

begin with some form of this basic question.

Look at it as your star moment: the director is dying to hear all the good things about you, so don't let him down! It is your best chance to market yourself in the manner that is most beneficial to you. If you have done your homework and the interviewer knows you through correspondence, webpage, etc. then this part won't be hard for you.

Show no ambivalence

Even though you've registered for 10 interviews, talk to every director as if she is the only one on your schedule. Later, when you have a few job offers, you can sort through them and make your choice.

Maintain an optimistic mind-set

Your interviewer is very likely to be a busy director who has a bunch of problems to cope with. You do not want to make an impression that you are going to be one more problem on his list. Directors like to hire those for whom life is a joy, not a chore.

Let the interviewer be in control

Do not try to “raise issues” or “prove yourself” if the recruiter prefers an informal conversation! It only means that your *Application Package* has done its job, you look and sound good. Do not spoil the picture! Engage in a lively dialogue.

End on a positive note

Everybody's life is a complex mixture of positive and negative experiences. How you handle the difficult questions often determines if you get the job or not. So, how do you handle difficult matters?

First of all, never dodge tricky questions! If you absolutely have to say something negative about yourself say it immediately. Start your answer with it.

But — do not accentuate the negative points. Move on. Re-focus a hard question to a brighter side.

For example, if the director asks you about your coaching experience and you have none, acknowledge the fact but also add that you are good at computers.

If you were fired show evidence of improvement and support it with credible material. Every cloud has a silver lining. Go through the questions at the end of this chapter. Write an affirmative ending for every hard point and practice them!

If you have to say something bad about your past school - stick to the facts.

Optimize your body language

Your body language must compliment, not contradict your verbal message. In the recruiter's own words:

"Look at me — I want people who can look me in the eye. Stand up for yourself, don't be shy. Don't yell at me either, but you have a brain and an opinion - show me. Looking at the floor or the walls or any place other than at me much of the time means you have trouble confronting things — and that means trouble for me."

Every aspect of your presentation is important, including all forms of nonverbal communication: handshakes, eye contact, signs of anxiety/confidence, and your general appearance.

A weak handshake communicates lack of confidence or initiative.

Poor eye contact can also make or break an applicant. Because many teachers have a captive audience in their students, and are used to communicating to groups of people in classes, often their eye contact in one-on-one meetings is not up to par. It is important to make frequent, sustained eye contact while being careful not to stare or appear threatening.

Clenched hands indicate a potential threat. Open palms indicate acceptance. Keep your hands visible all the time during the interview! To send a strong non-verbal message of acceptance and trust, keep your hands open. Most people find it difficult to lie when their palms are open.

Touching your nose, covering your mouth with your hand, rubbing your chin – in combination with a failure to maintain eye contact – communicate lack of confidence and insincerity. Whatever you say becomes doubtful. **Keep your hands away from your face!**



Avoiding the common traps

Killer mistake 1: rambling

Remember that something can go wrong at any time during the interview and you must not say more than you have to.

A+B+C= Success if,

A=Hard Work

B=Hard Play

C=Keeping your mouth shut.

—Albert Einstein

Many candidates failed their interviews because they said too much rather than too little. Don't talk yourself out of the job.

When you catch the director's attention, you will be tempted to keep on talking. The desire to be exhaustive translates into rambling, because the answer never finishes. Do not make this mistake. You have to stop and allow the director to ask the next question or make a comment.

Outlining all the contradictions and citing all the footnotes is essential for a research paper, but it's "death to an interview," says Ms. Kelsky, a former associate professor of anthropology at the University of Oregon.

Use a concluding sentence when the urge to elaborate strikes. Something like, "And I'll stop there. Let me know if you have any questions."

Killer mistake 2: going over the speed limit

A candidate talks too fast trying to say as much as possible in the shortest possible time. Two negative outcomes.



First, if you talk too fast, you give the director the impression of being uncomfortable or insecure; you want to be done with it as soon as possible. The recruiter takes it personally and your chances plummet. (Remember that overseas recruiting is all about personalities!)

Second, the director has to use extra effort to keep up with you. Directors do not like to make extra efforts and chances are that they will miss the most important points that you are trying to deliver, thus defeating the whole purpose of your high tempo.

Slow down.

Killer mistake 3: dodging questions

This is essentially an overkill of the right technique. The difference is that when you adapt your experience to a question the proper answer is within the reasonable range. You make a smooth transition. Even though your answer may not cover the question completely there is a common substance and your response is directly related to the question. If you avoid the question completely and start talking about something else, it makes a very bad impression.

Killer mistake 4: criticism

"I clearly remember my response to a question concerning administration to a director from Bangkok and knew as the words left my lips that they shouldn't have been uttered."

This is the only place in the whole program where we suggest that you do not speak the truth. Even if you think that your principal is a jerk, do not say so. Do not criticize in any way or gossip about former employers, fellow workers or students, even if you are encouraged to do so. Be courteous and respectful to your former employers and colleagues.

Killer mistake 5: sounding desperate

We have seen candidates who pleaded to be hired during the interview. This always makes a bad, unpleasant impression and never works for the candidate. The director may say something that will encourage you to start complaining. Don't fall for it. Remain positive.

The Questions

Be prepared for questions about your background, your educational goals, and your teaching style.

Your subject area and grade level, your strong and weak subjects, your objectives in the classroom, motivational techniques, curriculum ideas, use of computers in the classroom, if you use cooperative learning, individualized instruction, and strategies for slow or accelerated learners.

Be ready to talk about your classroom control and classroom management philosophy and systems, and dealing with difficult students.

— How is your classroom organized?

— Why did you become a teacher?

— Your favorite part of teaching?

— Your plans for professional development?

- Answer the questions thoroughly. You should have prepared outlines for the expected questions and very little should come as a surprise to you.
- Highlight important achievements from your career; the interviewer is not expected to pull information out of you, your ability to sell yourself is critical.
- Attempt to make the time as interesting and informative for your interviewer as possible.
- Never cover your mouth while speaking or rest your head, even momentarily, in your hands.
- Make frequent eye contact.
- Be precise and honest in your answers.
- Appear enthusiastic but not overconfident.
- Do not talk negatively about your previous or prior employment.
- Look over your notes about the school so you'll have some idea about the place. If the school is offering an informative session during the weekend, try to attend.

Don't assume

Again and again the old rule proves to be true: people hear what they want to hear, regardless of the actual words said. It is amazing that in many cases candidates and recruiters have a very different perspective of what was actually said.

For example, if the recruiter says, “We provide paid airfare,” the candidate will most likely understand it as a yearly paid home leave while in fact, it can be a free ticket at the beginning and at the end of the whole contract.

A recruiter may promise a free school car and the candidate will assume that it will be a brand new Prius. In reality, it can be an old Toyota that you'll have to

share with another teacher.

You must ask questions!

Questions show interest on your part and the interviewers take pride in speaking about their schools. Don't be shy to ask about the weather, temperature, food, language, clothing, or local customs of the host country. Cultural questions may reveal much more about the director, the school and the country.

Showing interest about everyday life, which is actually everyday extraordinary life, may bring up a whole new aspect to working for the school. These are the questions you must ask every recruiter before signing a contract.

- What is the teacher/student ratio?
- What is the make up of the student body?
- What special subject teachers does the school employ?
- Will I be responsible for art, music, PE?
- What type of preparation time will I have?
- Are there, or have there been, food/water/electricity shortages?
- What type of housing is provided and will utilities be paid?
- What are the working hours of the school?
- Will a round trip ticket be provided?
- Is there a teacher from the school attending the conference I might be able to speak with?
- Does the school provide personal laptops for teachers?
- Does the school have a media center, learning center, library, resource materials?
- What is the most pressing problem facing your staff right now?

- What organizations is the school accredited with?

Leaving the Interview

The interview will probably last the full half hour. Shake hands with the interviewer when you depart and thank him/her for his time. It's a good idea to take a few minutes after the interview to reflect. Make some mental or written notes about what went well and what could have been improved upon.

Note the questions you weren't prepared for. Consider how you are feeling about moving to that country and working for that person under those circumstances. Not every school is going to be a perfect match. I remember several exceptionally boring interviews, leaving the room feeling like curling up for a good long nap.

However, you must remember that the director, the school, and the country are complete and separate entities — although it is common to associate all three with the interviewer.

But some interviews will leave you craving more. Make some notes to remember about the school and what you liked about it. These quick notes will help you prepare for the next interview. If you didn't do as well as you know you could have, it's a valuable way to put a less ideal interview behind you and positively build on it to prepare for the next.

Write thank you letters by hand to each person you interviewed with. Thank them for their time and consideration and reiterate your interest if you are still interested in teaching there.

Remain discreet for the entire time of the fair!

In the recruiter's own words:

"This is a non-obvious critical time for you. I had one person come in and his interview went perfect. He appeared to be perfect. Knew what I wanted, met the qualifications, and seemed like a good candidate. I was almost ready to make him an offer. He got cocky and stopped in the lobby to make a phone call to his buddy. He did this all in the lobby. Started telling his buddy how he had conned me ... the job was his. Guess what? He was never asked back."

Fight the post-interview blues

Few candidates are absolutely happy with their performance. After every interview, you will probably feel like you should have said something differently or responded with a better answer. Some reflection is necessary to improve your interviewing skills. However, do not turn self-evaluation into post-interview blues. Think positively!

Reasons for Rejection

- 🎬 Poor personal appearance.
- 🎬 Overbearing-overaggressive-conceited "superiority complex"-"know-it-all."
- 🎬 Inability to express him/herself clearly, poor voice diction, grammar.
- 🎬 Lack of interest and enthusiasm, passive, indifferent.
- 🎬 Lack of confidence and poise, nervousness, ill at ease.
- 🎬 Overemphasis on money, interest only in best dollar offer.
- 🎬 Poor scholastic record.
- 🎬 Makes excuses — evasive, hedges on unfavorable factors in record.
- 🎬 Lack of tact.
- 🎬 Lack of maturity.
- 🎬 Lack of courtesy — ill mannered.
- 🎬 Condemnation of past employers.
- 🎬 Lack of social graces.
- 🎬 Marked dislike for schoolwork.
- 🎬 Lack of vitality.
- 🎬 Fails to maintain eye contact with the interviewer.

- 🎬 Limp, fishy handshake.
- 🎬 Indecision.
- 🎬 Loafs during vacations-lakeside pleasures.
- 🎬 Sloppy application letter and CV.
- 🎬 Merely shopping around.
- 🎬 Lack of knowledge in field of specialization.
- 🎬 Unwillingness to go to the country where the school is located.
- 🎬 Cynical.
- 🎬 Low standards.
- 🎬 Lazy.
- 🎬 Intolerant — strong prejudices.
- 🎬 Narrow interests.
- 🎬 No interest in extra-curricular activities.
- 🎬 Inability to take criticism.
- 🎬 Lack of appreciation of the value of experience.
- 🎬 Radical ideas.
- 🎬 Failure to express appreciation for interviewer's time.
- 🎬 Asks no questions about the job.
- 🎬 High-pressure type.
- 🎬 Indefinite response to questions.

Your job interview is a two-way process!

If you don't like the director...

We have discussed how to sell yourself, so far. But you are also a buyer. You don't want to end up working for somebody you don't like. Therefore, be cautious. Trust your gut feeling. What to do if you don't feel like accepting the contract?

If you feel that you would not like to work with the director who is interviewing you or if you discovered something creepy about the school or country that makes you uncomfortable — don't show it during the interview. Ask questions about what worries you and think the answers over. Proceed as usual and thank the interviewer for his time. If you receive a job offer that you don't want to accept write a polite note and reject the offer.

You don't need to explain anything but you can always say that you accepted another offer. The recruiter will appreciate your prompt notification. If she presses you for an immediate answer, ask for some time to think it over.

You need time to sort through the information and your interview impressions. Reject the offer in a friendly manner — you may use this person later. Remember that this is a small world and many directors exchange information on teachers and candidates. Being friendly even with those you don't like shows maturity and pays off in the long run.

Congratulations! If you have done everything as we suggested you must be swamped with job offers by now.

Accepting offers. Signing contracts.

“There is no failure. Only feedback.” — Anonymous

It used to be that people had to wait for a long time after a recruiting fair to find out if they won any job offers. The current tendency is to be offered a job right on the spot.

Even those recruiters that usually need the board's approval for their candidates are now under pressure to make an offer before the fair is over. It is a really new trend that has caught on lately, be ready for it. However, there still can be different outcomes of a job interview. At the end of a recruiting fair chances are, you will have to deal with a combination that includes all of them.



“No, thank you.”

You can be told that you are not suitable for the position and thanked for attending the interview. More often, though, if the result is negative, the director won't call you back at all. This may happen for the reasons that are beyond your control (e.g. the school requires 5 years experience and as it turns out you have only 3, visa restrictions, etc.). Don't panic, this has happened to everybody and the best thing you can do is to ask the interviewer why you were rejected. Many directors may be uncomfortable to answer this question directly so rephrase it. Ask, “I have 3 more interviews this weekend, what can I do to improve my chances?”

If you are polite and friendly, this is the best way to receive any valuable feedback. So, don't be shy, ask this question. It will not harm you – even though you may not receive an honest answer it is a good habit to ask for feedback. Remember that the recruiter's choice is often influenced by other circumstances, unrelated to your performance. If your application is rejected - do not take it as a personal offense. You can't win every job, but you can definitely learn from your experience to do better.

Flexible candidates who have no complications (dependents, health issues, etc) get their contracts fast. Especially if you have done your homework, know how to interview and don't ask stupid questions. If you are a couple with dependent children you may be harder to place even though the recruiter likes you. In many cases the director has to consider various circumstances and to consult with the principals, accountant, etc. For example you have a three-year old and the school's kindergarten starts at 4. There may or may not be a solution and the

recruiter will need to find out if an exception is possible, and what it will require, etc., before he can make a decision.

The other common reason for a delay might be that the director has interviewed several qualified candidates and she is uncertain.

Why does it take so long?

— What should I do if I don't hear from the school? Many candidates begin to panic if they don't hear from the school within a day or two. It may take awhile! Overseas directors travel from one job fair to another, you may be ready to expect a job offer while your director is only preparing to process a new batch of candidates in a new city or country.

You compete with all past and future candidates!

You and the recruiter have different perspectives. The recruiter has a lot of things to do during a compressed recruiting trip. It is also physically difficult. He must cope with the jet lag and attend to many big and small issues while in the States. You come to the fair with only one purpose – to get a job.

He has several vacancies to fill and there are many things to ponder. He is attending several recruiting fairs and he has to remember and compare the two-dozen candidates he has interviewed. You will only have to focus on the 2-5 schools you have spoken with.

Remember that many recruiters would like to consult with the lower level administrators before making the final decision.

How to motivate hesitant recruiters

Always send a thank you note to the director. If you have time and desire, use your computer and color printer to prepare custom cards that include your name, URL of your JoyJobs.com webpage, other identifiers. Handwritten notes are preferred.

Dear Mr. Sawyer,

It was a pleasure to meet you and learn more about the Anglo-American School in Sofia. I remain very interested in the second grade position. I spoke with Kimberly on Saturday evening, and she told

me a great deal about the city and school community and more about the particulars of living in Bulgaria. Thank you for referring me to her. I look forward to hearing from you and I reiterate my interest in the position. Thank you.

After the interview, ask the recruiter when you may be contacted about the job. This will give you some peace of mind and you won't sound desperate if you have to call or write.

Use this time to learn more about the school and the country. You may have your own concerns but if you accept a job offer it will be too late to reverse your decision. However, you can prepare and avoid surprises. Larger schools have a lot of teachers to hire every year so your director may be entangled in the web of candidates, resumes, and promises. It is not uncommon for the recruiters to simply forget about you. He may think that he has already finished with you (contract signed) while you are waiting for him to get back to you.

They may have met someone else and they don't know what to do. This is especially common early in the season when the recruiters know that they have 2 or 3 more fairs to attend; there is plenty of time ahead, so they can afford some procrastination. Being pushy does not always help although making your voice heard is important.

If you have a few job offers you can use these circumstances to put some pressure on the recruiter of your choice. There is no need for any mind games – simply tell them that you received other offers and you must make up your mind. Like most people, recruiters do not like to lose. Knowing that you are in the position to select another employer is a strong motivation for an indecisive person.

Once you have accepted a job, either orally or in writing, the recruiter stops interviewing for that position. That's why many recruiters are reluctant to offer a contract immediately — they want to keep shopping!

Once you agreed, you have a professional and ethical commitment to honor your agreement with the recruiting school. Only accept a job offer if you have every intention of fulfilling the terms of the contract. This is not Wal-Mart; you can't return your agreement for a refund or replacement.

You may even receive a better offer a few days later. Regardless of how great the

new proposal is – you **MUST** decline it. Otherwise your reputation as an overseas educator will be ruined. Carefully consider each offer and, if unsure, ask for the time you need to make a decision you know you can commit to. Quite often though, after you have accepted the job, the school appears to be slow to mail you the contract.

There may be different circumstances that prevent the school from finalizing the contract. There may be a ‘buyer’s remorse’ situation. Sometimes the director returns to the school to discover a burning problem to be solved immediately and forgets about you.

Remember that you do not have a job until you have the contract on paper! Call and email the schools, be polite but persistent. Send thank you notes to all directors you interviewed with, regardless of whether it resulted in an offer or not. Nothing fancy – a simple handwritten card or an email message will do.

Immediate job offers

A serious recruiter will always understand your need to think over an offer and if he/she is too pushy there may be some problems with the school itself.

However, it is most common for recruiters to offer a contract immediately after the interview. Be ready to consider a quick job offer. This can be stressful, as you have to make a decision quickly — when most likely you do not have all the information you need to make that decision.

Do not allow the recruiter to force you into making an immediate decision if you are not sure what to do. Most people associate jobs with countries, so if a country has a good image so does the job. This is an incorrect assumption. You can have the most lousy experience in the most famous cities of the world and visa versa.

There are excellent positions in countries you may have never heard of. And we have encountered pretty mediocre schools in the heart of Western Europe, the most appealing continent to most Americans.

You have the right to request a couple days to think over a job offer. However, delaying the decision may jeopardize your chances. No News Is (Usually) Bad

News.

Here's another scenario: You actually get an offer over the phone/ Skype, discuss salary, but the promised official offer letter never arrives. You call, email, pester the offer makers.

While it's quite likely that there is merely some - you guessed it - administrative delay, there may be something more sinister going on.

"During my fifth annual job search, I found myself in just that situation, with a promise that an offer letter was on its way. The initial delay I chalked up to the spring break. Six weeks later I got a call telling me that the offer had been rescinded." —Teacher

Bottom line, push (without being pushy) to get the administrative details taken care of so you can relax and get ready for the job. Contracts: The important elements to check when analyzing the offer, consider the school's personal and recruitment leave policy, professional development and employment restriction. It is important to have a paid recruitment leave.

You should expect the following:

1. Personal leave

Personal leave with pay shall be granted for two days with prior approval from the director. Reasons need not be specified. Personal days that are not used shall be reimbursed at a rate of 1/180 salary at the end of the school year.

Implementation guidelines:

—Not normally used before or after school holidays. At the discretion of the director a maximum of two requests of this nature may be granted at one time.

—No personal leave days may be taken during the first two weeks and the last two weeks of the school year.

2. Recruitment leave

Recruited staff will be granted three to five days of paid recruitment leave for the sole purpose of recruiting for new position. This may be granted only once

during the contracted period and unused days will not be reimbursed.

3. Check if there is an employment restriction

The four-year restriction shall be rewritten to apply only to the overseas recruited staff. Local teaching staff will be exempt from the restriction and contracts will be renewed as long as performance is at expected level and position remains in the school structure.

4. Professional Development

Professional development shall be restructured to reflect the following : the director will budget funds for professional development. This amount may be accumulated for two years and after this period the teacher's fund will return to zero. The money may be spent on conference attendance and other related costs during the school year and/or summer study tuition as approved by the director. As soon as you receive your contract and working papers confirm receipt and start preparing for departure. Unless you are filling an urgent vacancy you will have a couple weeks to make the necessary arrangements. There are a lot of loose ends to take care of so don't waste any time!

5. Housing

6. Airfare

7. Excessive baggage allowance

8. Health, accidental and life insurances


9. Settling-in allowance

The Choice

Every overseas assignment is a journey to the unknown so do not agonize over the decision. You must be mentally prepared to take a risk. Time and again, we must emphasize the advantage of flexibility. People who have strong preferences about where they want to teach often pass on great opportunities – most often

not even knowing what they missed.

Here's an interesting story submitted to us:

 *We encouraged a very good friend to seek employment overseas. CIS accepted her application and invited her to the London fair. As her current contract pays poorly, we loaned her our copy [of this guide], coached her on interviewing and what to expect from European educators, and sent her on her way.*

*She was offered two positions: one in Helsinki and one in Singapore. She turned both down (!) because she wanted a position in Western Europe. She managed to argue with one director about special education (*sigh* good friends are NOT always smart!), and complained that "everything was so competitive" at the London fair.*

Our points: don't go to the fairs with bias riding on your shoulder... don't expect people competing for the same job to be friendly... learn a little geography (I was concerned when she didn't know where or what Bangladesh is)... find someone who knows what business suits SHOULD look like to coach you on attire... and don't whine to your friends AFTER turning down two job offers!

Cheerio! E.P. and Lorina

Next: Visas and Relocation

Visas and Relocation



Dear Pam and Igor, Please send me a phone number I can call to order working visas. I'd like to pay with my Master Card.

Sorry, you can't order a work visa like pizza. Even though there are many third-party commercial services, all visas are issued by **governments and their respective embassies**. The agencies act as intermediaries. In most cases, you don't need them.

What is a Visa?

Basically, a visa is a permit granted to you by a **foreign country** to do certain activities on its territory for a specified duration of time. In the context of work, your visa has to have the word "employment" in it.

Passport

If you don't already have a passport, apply for one immediately. If you have one, make sure it's good for at least one year from your departure date. Otherwise, renew it before you leave. A renewal through your consulate abroad is slower and more expensive, however possible.



Your work visa

This is how it works, in brief:

1. Your school sends your job contract and visa application directions.
2. You fill out the visa forms, attach photos and other documents (medical examination, passport, etc.) and submit the application to the consulate of your host country. If your city has no consulate, you send your application by registered mail.
3. After processing, the consulate sends back your passport and work visa. Or you pick it up in person. (This is why schools must hire early: visa processing takes time!)
4. Upon arrival, you will be issued a foreign resident card that will allow you to open a bank account, rent property, and do everything else that locals do.

There may be significant differences in this process. The following situations are typical:

- Most common: obtain a visa through a foreign consulate in your home country. Your job contract is the legal basis for the visa application.
- Your school takes care of the whole process. You receive your visa via DHL.
- You leave without a visa. The processing is done when you arrive in the host country. This happens when your country has no overseas consulates, such as Bahrain.
- You do not need a visa. For example, you or your spouse are Irish or British and your school is in Spain, France, Italy or any other member of the European Union. Or, you are an American and you are recruited for a military base via the DODEA.

—When we taught in Spain the visa processing was done at the Spanish consulate in New York City. It was slow and complicated. We had to resubmit the application twice, because of a minor typo. The consulate didn't like the way the application letter had been translated, "To whom it may concern."

—For the job in Japan, the visa application was through the Japan consulate in Portland Oregon. It was quick and hassle-free.

—For the job in Hong Kong, the school did all the paperwork; we received our visas by DHL.

—For the job in Bulgaria, we arrived in Sofia without visas. The school worked with the Bulgarian Ministry of Labor to provide us with diplomatic ID cards, which doubled as “work visas”. (The diplomatic status offered some serious advantages, such as an immunity from the local police and other authorities.)

As you can see, there can be significant variations in your visa situation, depending on your nationality,

your current location (home or abroad), the country you are going to, as well as the current political relationships between these countries and your home country.

Taking Pets Abroad

Do not assume you will be able bring your pet, talk with the recruiter. Most problems arise from the housing restrictions. If housing is not an issue, cats and dogs are usually fine. You will need to have a health certificate from a veterinarian and documentation of a rabies vaccine.

You must contact the airline at least 48 hours before departure, preferably longer, to be sure that there is space. Only small dogs and cats can go in the cabin, even so, some airlines will not allow them to do so and they will be sent as special baggage in a heated and ventilated hold.

Dogs, cats, and turtles are duty-free. For dogs and cats, the primary concern is rabies; vaccinations must take place at least 30 days before entry into the country, and you should bring all documentation of up-to-date vaccinations.

The general rule is that your pet must have a recent rabies shot, and an *International Health Certificate*.

Returning to the US is easier. Typically, your dog or cat will simply need a standard set of documents, including documentation of a rabies vaccination and a health certificate from a veterinarian.

We had our puppy spend 30 - 40 minutes in the travel cage every day, one week before departure, to get her acquainted to the restricted environment. She appeared very nervous at first. Right before the flight, she also received a small dose of tranquilizer. It was a long flight from Sofia to JFK, New York City!

Packing. What to Bring

If 50 million people (the size of a typical country) can do without something, so

can you. Most every day items are available in every corner of the world. Moving overseas is an excellent opportunity to leave your clutter behind. Most schools will provide you with a list of items you may want to bring. Pack certain small items between your clothes, which will comfort you once you are far away.

Shipping allowance

Schools will vary in the amount of baggage they will have shipped for you. If a baggage allowance is offered, take advantage of it. Carry as little with you as possible.

It may take some time for your shipment to reach you because of customs and border control, but it will arrive.

Label each box **1 of 10** or however many boxes you are shipping so you will know if all the boxes have arrived safely.

Common follow up questions

- You should inquire about a dress code at the school and about cultural expectations of the country and pack accordingly.
- Ask about the weather conditions and average temperatures for summer and winter months.
- It is advisable to find out what is available on the local market.

Many schools have webpages dedicated specifically to the issues of moving and settling-in. By all means study them! But on the whole, do not worry too much about stuff.

Consider the availability of medicines that you routinely purchase. Prescription drugs are cheaper everywhere outside the United States but since the commercial names are often different, you need to consult with a local doctor for substitution.

We taught with a young woman from Brooklyn who brought cases of all her favorite toiletries with her for her one-year assignment in Spain. When her

mother saw her king-sized box of condoms she commented, “*Wishful thinking or just planning ahead?*”

When our Spanish friend saw her collection of shampoos, creams, soaps and lotions she responded quite disgustedly that Spain “*was not the Third World.*”

Get good bags

Invest in good, sturdy bags. You will never regret that. Get the sturdiest bags possible. Forget about the style. Rough pavements are hard for luggage! Do not expect polished granite and carpets on the floor.

Your bags won’t travel in first class. In fact, they will be abused. We had our bags lost and found, flown to different countries, dropped off loading platforms, kicked and thrown by airport personnel. Do not expect that your bags will be receiving special treatment. Most teachers will tell you stories about the baggage disasters they had or have witnessed:

“We watched several bags fall off a moving conveyor belt going into a plane. One opened and several pieces of clothing were scattered on the tarmac blown about by the wind and plane exhaust.”

Health Issues

Ask your recruiter or consult your doctor or local pharmacist to learn if you will need any specific vaccinations before you leave. The US Department of State also publishes a list of suggested vaccinations and safety precautions. Required inoculations vary across the globe. Plan at least a month ahead to receive the proper care. You should also plan to update your Tetanus shot.

People die from lack of medication or medical attention. If you need prescription drugs, bring enough with you for the year. Ask your recruiter about the health facilities nearby if you have needed medical attention in the past.

Air travel

You may also choose to select a special meal service. The reason is that they always serve vegetarian, low-calorie and Kosher meals first. It is important because you want to go to bed as soon as possible.

The only way to manage long transcontinental flights is to sleep through them. Take a sleeping pill, insert your earplugs, cover your face and go to bed! When the plane lands you are going to be fresh and relaxed - as opposed to those who chose to watch movies for 10 hours. You need a clear head to go through the customs / immigration, and find your school representative.

How to sleep in the economy cabin

Neck support devices have never worked for us. We suggest the Skyrest Travel Pillow (Amazon, SkyMall, etc). Place it on your tray table /lap to sleep leaning forward.

Take **Melatonin**: 10mg before your meal on the plane and at bedtime on the first night upon arrival; 5mg at bedtime thereafter (remember it is estimated that 1-day is needed for each 1-hour change in the time zone for the body to adapt completely). The other good choice is **Glycine**, one 1,000 mg capsule.

Arriving in a Foreign Country

Your school will arrange pickup at the airport. It is common that the shuttle bus will bring you to your temporary residence. Many schools offer a month of rent-free accommodation, for you to find your own place. In Hong Kong, we were placed in a luxury suite with maid service, which was a refreshing experience.

Clothing

Try to look less foreign. Not for the sake of security (it is much less of an issue than many people think) but because life is just a little easier for you, psychologically. For example, if everyone is wearing long pants your shorts will attract attention right away.

Stay Active

Find a big sports facility or gym and enroll in a class. It's a good way to burn off steam during your first difficult months as well as a great way to meet people. We recommend this as a priority. See what other services are offered at the facility. In Sofia, for example, massage and beauty services were located at the

big sports hall.

Is there a swimming pool? Sauna? Also check at some of the large hotels as they also might have sports facilities worth investigating. Learn if there are any spas or mineral baths in town and treat yourself regularly. Barbers, hair stylists and manicurists can also be wonderful ways to learn about the place. I stopped for a hair trim at a tiny beauty parlor in Sofia only to be treated to the standard head massage and rose oil hair treatment after the cut!

Submerge in the cultural life

Find out what cultural events are going on and attend them. Sofia was extremely rich in musical events but equally as poor in advertising them so it was often frustrating to discover something wonderful had already come and gone.

Don't rely on the information coming to you as it does here in the States. Many cultures are not commercial and advertising won't reach you. Find the centers for music, culture, opera, art, etc. and make a point of passing them once a week to check on the offerings.

Don't be surprised to find that operating hours for work and play are vastly different from the ones you're used to. I was in Spain for over four months before I discovered the amazing night life which had been going on without me! We would go out for dinner at eight o'clock only to find the restaurants empty and absolutely nothing happening, except for families promenading the town. It took a night out with a Spanish teacher to learn that life doesn't begin until very late indeed.

We met for dinner at 11:00 p.m. and proceeded from there. Most clubs didn't open until 2:00 or 3:00 A.M.

Don't be insulted if no one invites you into his/her home. Americans spend a lot more time in their homes than do other cultures. Consider it a major compliment if you are invited and don't arrive without a gift for the hostess. Learn what is appropriate to bring (flowers, wine, chocolates, etc.) Keep your eyes open and take the opportunities offered to you.

What is the best way of interacting with the local culture once you get there? A

good way to begin is by foot. Walk every corner of your new home, stopping at the places that look interesting. Stop for coffee or tea, step into the gardens, parks, churches, grocery stores. Take notes if you have to!

Many years ago my German professor told me about a scholarship that was offered which no one had applied for and suggested I try. I remember asking him, "What will I do there? I'm almost finished with my degree!" His obvious answer, "Drink coffee! Investigate Beer! Find a pub and be there! You'll have enough time to finish your degree, this is a once in a lifetime opportunity." I took his advice, received that scholarship, and spent a year at a German University! —Teacher

Oh the places you'll go! There are a million ways to insinuate yourself into your new home. Buy a bus, tram or metro pass and learn how the system works. A teacher friend in Italy met her future husband on the train on the way home from work! Your first priority may be to find a language tutor of your own or to enroll in a language class. Although you may think you are foreign language illiterate, give it your best try. It's unbelievable how far the few words you learn will take you. Alternatively, use an electronic translator in your iPhone.

Be discreet

As in your home country, attempt to keep your private life private. Try not to drink gross quantities and make a spectacle of yourself if you are living in a small place.

Don't let careless incidents come back and haunt you. We have come in contact with many Ambassadors and diplomats through the years and the ones who have retained their sobriety throughout the evening certainly gained my respect and admiration. Not all passed the test, though.

By all means, stay away from drugs while living overseas. Penalties are often fierce and your government may not be able to help you. There are several thousand Americans serving time in foreign penitentiary systems right now, primarily for drug offenses.

Sexual orientation is also a private issue. Gays and Lesbians will find it easier to find each other overseas; there are clubs and organizations in almost every country.

Local groups organize parties and other events. There are no universal rules

regarding love, sex and courtship, every culture has its traditions. There are few other areas where misunderstandings are so common.

Amy Raphael, Overseas Program Manager at University of Pennsylvania, emphasizes that talking with other people is the best way to discover the norms of sexual behavior. In some countries, it is common to hold hands and kiss in public places. Some cultures disapprove of this behavior. Dating does not have the same significance as it does at home. It also may have a variety of forms. Throughout Europe, you can find condom machines in public restrooms.

Where to meet people? As you explore your new country you will find a lot of interesting places. Do what you normally like to do - if you enjoy music, go to concerts, if you like sightseeing, sign up for a bus tour and so on. There are all kinds of events going on all the time. You will also meet a lot of expats. Some people spend their time exclusively in the expat hangouts.

“There is certainly a heightened sense of needing to latch onto something familiar, and so people connect a lot quicker and on a much deeper level,” says Raphael. *“ They are in a place where nobody understands them, so they want as much understanding from whoever’s around as possible.”*

Tax Tips (USA)

If you live outside of the US on April 15, the IRS may give you an automatic tax filing extension to June 15, without requiring any special paperwork. If you owe any taxes, they are still due on April 15, even if you qualify for the automatic extension.

Your first \$100,000 of foreign earned income is not subject to income tax if you meet certain requirements. The first year you live outside the US, you must remain outside the US for 330 out of 365 days in order to exclude your foreign income from taxation.

Metric Units

The United States remains the only country that utilizes the units dating back to medieval England. The rest of the world, including the UK, has long switched to the universal metric system. Our advice is to forget about conversion tables from

the very beginning. Start thinking in decimals - grams, meters, liters and degrees Celsius. It makes your life easier almost immediately.

Food

You may have food cravings. A fellow teacher in Sofia complained regularly about the lack of split peas. The stuff was available, of course. Because the language, brands and packaging are different, it is hard to find even familiar products. Your constant question is, “What is this?”

This is especially true in Japan, which has everything labeled in Japanese only. Even if you see it, you do not know what it is. For example, dried Tuna shavings.

We spoke with a woman who spent two weeks on an island in the South Pacific and all she was served was fish and rice. She insists that there was nothing else to eat. She said that to this day, she is still thirsty.

The key to a satisfying overseas experience is your ability to adapt to the local cuisine and lifestyle in general. Not only will it save you a lot of money but it will also enrich your life with unforgettable experiences.

In most countries food is not simply a source of nutrients but a social and cultural phenomenon. People stop at the vegetable market every day to buy fresh produce, eggs, meat, etc. It is done not because they don't have refrigerators but because it is a vital part of the daily routine. In some countries people shop for fresh groceries twice a day: early in the morning and in the evening.

"Some of my favorite photos from Spain were taken in the meat house, part of the marketplace devoted to nothing but meat, chicken and eggs. When my class toured the market, we saw first hand that an eye is actually a little round ball." —Teacher

Another important thing about food is the social significance that many cultures attach to it. The attitude is different in many cultures. In France, for example, fast service means bad service: people come to cafes and restaurants to enjoy their time. Serving you with a quick meal followed by a bill implies that you are not welcome.

In Spain people are accustomed to leisurely meals with friends and family. The

Spanish eat out every day and there is no tradition of inviting friends to a dinner at one's house. Life goes on in cafes and restaurants long after midnight.

Returning Home

“How beautiful it is to do nothing, and then rest afterwards.”—Spanish proverb.

Regardless of how well you were connected with home during your stay overseas you will find a lot of changes when you return. Reverse culture shock affects everybody, regardless of country and nationality.

Our friend Fumiko Nakai, a fellow teacher from Japan, wrote to us about her return home after spending 4 years in Portland, Oregon:

“I am safely back in Tokyo. Well, I do feel those four years in the States brought me a big gap and I am trying to catch up with everything, which is already too much and too late... I am surprised to find out that I don't know anything even though it is my home and I know the language. Kekkou mendou desu! Prices went up so high while I was away and women look so skinny! I already gave up to compete against them but I still wonder what they eat.”

Closure

We deeply hope that this guidebook has met your needs... We would love to hear about your experiences. Obviously, everybody will have a different story! Please send questions, comments and corrections: info@joyjobs.com

Thank you and have a great trip!

—Pam and Igor



Appendix

Summary, Samples



Mathematics / Physics

I have taught all levels of mathematics from 6th grade math through AP Calculus BC. Teaching mathematics has been a fun and rewarding journey, starting in a small farm community in Kansas, spending several years at an American school in Belgium, then an all-girls Catholic school in Massachusetts, followed by two years at an American school in Germany, and finally, eight years teaching AP Calculus and AP Physics at a private all girls school in Tennessee.

Most of my career has involved the teaching of mathematics. However, in Tennessee I had the chance to teach AP Physics. This was all new material for me, and I enjoyed it immensely. My students did very well on the AP Physics tests, scoring mainly 4's and 5's, so it appears that I did a fine job of teaching the course. What I did find out for sure, is that I do enjoy teaching science. As much as I love teaching AP courses, the frustrating part of teaching an AP course is the necessity to keep moving on material. It would be fun to teach a science course where we could stop and explore and investigate without the pressure of the curriculum involved with the AP test. I would look forward to the opportunity to teach any science course. Of course, I have never tired of teaching mathematics.

In addition to helping students master the important fundamentals of mathematics and physics, I have also enjoyed the immense amount of time that I have spent with the students outside of class—training for and participating in math competitions, teaching the fundamentals of chess, coaching basketball and cross country, and sponsoring trips, with all of these different activities.

Many of these activities involving the students with whom I was entrusted were quite consuming and exhausting, but for some reason, it all seemed to be fun. I look forward to making more great memories.

ESL / French

I am a certified Primary/Junior Teacher, as well as an English as a Second Language Teacher. I am very passionate about languages. Ever since traveling the world and achieving my Honours degree in Languages and Linguistics, I have come to achieve a portion of my goal. I am currently on a Teaching contract until the end of June 2015. I am teaching Grade 3 at a French Immersion School.

Over the years, I have had the opportunity to work with children and adults in a variety of international educational settings. I graduated with a Bachelor of Education from Queen's University in 2009, and I completed my TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) Certificate in 2012. In addition to my academic qualifications, I am also fluent in French and I have Intermediate level Spanish and German. I graduated with Honours in French from Trent University in 2008.

I spent a summer working as a camp counselor in the USA with children from abusive or troubled families. This opportunity gave me the chance to develop professionally in an international setting. The personal connections established during my travels have changed me as a person, and have strengthened my dedication to the promotion of international awareness.

Working as a classroom teacher has also been an asset in preparing me for a future in education, as I have gained valuable experience planning and implementing units of study that are engaging and relevant to my students. Throughout my grade 3 French Immersion LTO assignment this year, I have demonstrated my commitment to student learning by providing ongoing formal and informal feedback and assessments. I have shown that I am willing to go the extra mile to ensure that all of my students reach their full potential, and have fun while doing so.

Speech Language Pathologist

I received my Masters of Science in Speech Language Pathology from The University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Currently, I am a speech language pathologist at an elementary school in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, USA. I currently hold my certificate of clinical competence from the American Speech Language and Hearing Association and am licensed to

practice in Maryland.

In my position, I evaluate the speech and language of children, from ages three to eleven, and am developing individualized goals and objectives to help them access their grade level curriculum. I am a member of the school's multidisciplinary special education team where our responsibilities include, but are not limited to, reviewing screening information, evaluations, and communicating with parents and classroom teachers to determine if a child needs special education services. I am also one of the trained Collaborative Decision Making Team (CDM) members at our school.

It is very satisfying to share my skills and knowledge with children, parents, and other educators. I promote communication by providing various levels of support to meet various needs of children both on my caseload through special education as well as provide support in the classroom setting. This can include individual picture schedule, individual/group sessions, social stories, scripts, role play scenarios, and classroom lessons.

Primary Class Teacher: Music, History, English

I am a committed teacher with degrees in Music and History, Music Education, Primary Teaching and a certificate in ESL. I am currently assisting in teaching in the PYP program at Scotch College, an IB school in Western Australia. I am seeking to fill a full-time Primary teacher position, and will be attending the Search Job Recruitment Fair to be held in Sydney from the 3rd to the 5th of January.

Over the last 15 years, I have taught Classroom Music, Piano, Violin and Guitar and Singing, English, Social Studies, and English as a Second Language, both in my home country of Australia and also in Nepal, England, Mexico, and Russia.

I love unlocking the potential in each child and using creative ways to do this. I have written and produced 3 original musicals, and have experience of taking tours interstate and within Western Australia.

In recent years I have had a growing desire to teach in the Primary classroom. To this end, I have completed a Masters of Teaching (Primary) at Notre Dame University. The course has given me a comprehensive understanding of Curriculum Framework and Outcomes Based Education. I am now very keen to teach in a Primary classroom using both the experience I have as well as the new

things I have learnt.

Teacher of French

Bonjour! I am a native French speaker with 9 years of teaching experience at all levels and all ages and my goal is to teach French overseas in an international school at the middle/high school level.

As a French emigrant living in America, I know what it takes to learn a foreign language. I give a lot of credit to anyone that makes the effort to learn French or any foreign languages as it requires a lot of work, repetition, patience and practice. But I also want students to feel that learning French is a rewarding experience. While teaching the language, I like to include French history, geography, music and food through creative and fun activities. Students discover how valuable it is to know a language when they start traveling.

I became a French teacher after being unsatisfied with the way I was taught English at school in France. It made me believe that being a native is the most significant quality a foreign language teacher can have in order to correctly pronounce sounds as well as exposing students to cultural aspects of another society and it is also crucial to teach the target language in a real context.

Aside teaching the language, my goal is to motivate students to appreciate differences, to become open minded and more tolerant toward other cultures. With the global foreign trade, tourism, international business, and international relations, knowledge of other languages and the understanding of cultural differences is a must and I am thrilled to bring my part of the contribution.

Generalist / English

My background includes teaching everything from pre-school through the college levels, inclusively. Also, instruction in public and private school settings; after school programs and one-on-one tutoring.

For the past 9 years, I have been teaching overseas. It is challenging but very rewarding. I am finding at the end of the day, students are generally the same everywhere. Having taught quite a few different nationalities, I find all students are interesting, seekers of knowledge, have a willingness to learn, are fun, and do not like homework.

Teaching has been very good to me and I would never have been to the places that I have been or met the people that I have met without it. I have traveled to over 13 countries, either having lived there or visited on vacations.

Below are some brief words of recommendations from supervisors, colleagues, parents and students.

Mathematics - IB

I have been teaching in an international context for 7 years and literally fell in love with the IB programs. My view of these curricula is that it gives the school the necessary creative power to implement high educational standards and global values in a local context with specific requirements. This mission is indeed difficult to achieve. However, I reached a contenting recognition of the potential in making it my professional goal:

I have enjoyed working in a community of teachers and learners to provide the best environment for the development of well-balanced and successful students.

Over the past 5 years, I have also decided to gather an experience from inside the IB organization; Moderating the MYP portfolios, Marking the Diploma Exam papers and finally taking part in the Curriculum Review process have given me a sharp expertise in how to configure the content I teach, harmoniously with the requirements of standardized assessments.

I am looking for a school that encourages initiatives and new ideas and puts educational values before academic achievement in its mission statement and actual practice.

Mathematics, Teaching team

I have taught math in one of the best school systems in the Midwest for the last 26 years, and have thoroughly enjoyed working with both my students and the other professionals I have been fortunate enough to have been associated with. Sioux Falls, South Dakota has an excellent school system and as a staff member, I have had the privilege to be involved in the latest in technology and progressive ideas in education for my entire career. I am looking for a position where I would be teaching math, 7th through Algebra 2. I would also love to teach psychology, economics, personal finance, or history.

I feel very fortunate to have found an occupation that I not only enjoy, but also feel that I can be very effective at. I truly enjoy being around young people and sharing their enthusiasm for life and learning. I believe that it is my responsibility as a teacher to do whatever I can to develop strong rapport with each of my students and help them develop their skills in both math, and life, to the best of their abilities. I believe that education should be interesting, challenging and enjoyable.

My wife and I are excited about the opportunity to live in other parts of the world, and experience new cultures. We have enjoyed traveling to several other countries and relish the idea of being able to spend an extended period of time in another part of the world. We look forward to beginning a new chapter in our lives. My wife, Jeanette is a Nurse Anesthetist with a Masters Degree. She would be willing to teach, work as a school nurse, or even work in a hospital, if necessary, to get a visa. We are both planning on attending the UNI Overseas Job Fair at the end of January.

Music

My students have ranged from young children to adults, coming from all socio-economic groups and diverse cultures around the world. I myself have traveled throughout the U.S. and internationally seeking firsthand experience as an educator and student of foreign cultures and the performing arts. Because of my father's career with the State Department, I was also raised abroad living in Japan, Burma, Korea and Pakistan. More recently, I have hosted cultural tours throughout Europe including Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Italy.

My background has enabled me to work well with a multi-cultural student population. I have now taught students of all ages including my current position at an international school in Kiev, a summer arts camp for children in North Carolina, private students as young as 10 and college students from every department at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

My students have gone on to successful careers as teachers, musicians, doctors, scientists and entrepreneurs. I find nothing more fulfilling than watching my students learn and become successful adults and I continue to be in contact with many of my students to this day.

I once had a very shy but serious student who came from the Virgin Islands and

barely spoke English — much less sang in a foreign language. She has gone on to graduate from California State University in Los Angeles with a Master of Music in voice. She writes me that she has sung Verdi's Requiem with a voice as "big as a house." Another student who wanted a career in musical theater has sung the lead role in the national tour of Elton John's Aida.

Physics

Currently I am working as a teacher at Calcutta International School, teaching Physics in class 8 and A-2, IGCSE and EDEXCEL curriculum. I am also a consultant Physics teacher at The Cambridge School taking AS level and A-2 Level classes under The University of Cambridge Examinations. Prior to this I have a seven years teaching experience at Asia's largest School, South Point High School in the capacity of Science and Maths teacher. Moreover I also have been selected as a part time faculty at Delhi Public School, Ruby Park where I am scheduled to join in June 2009 to start their first Class 11 batch.

As a teacher with 7 years of experience I am adaptable, work well with a wide variety of people and am continually inventive. I have extensive experience working with diverse student populations, a solid knowledge of various curriculum including EDEXCEL and IGCSE and most importantly, a strong love of teaching Physics. I am a teacher with a deep appreciation for people of different cultures. My experiences while teaching at Calcutta International School has confirmed my decision to pursue an international teaching position.

As a teacher I strive to provide a learning environment that will inspire and challenge students to become responsible citizens who carry with them a life long passion for learning. I have learned from personal experience and observation that the most meaningful learning takes place when students are motivated and interested. I believe this can be achieved by giving students a voice in the learning process and inviting them to bring their own ideas and experiences to the classroom. I am a team player and freely share my skills with others, as well as keeping an open mind to the fact that I can always learn from others, including my students.

Science

I currently serve as Advance Placement Biology and Honors Biology teacher at

Milton High School in Alpharetta, Georgia. Science and inquiry have always been a part of my life and my passion. There is not a field in science that I am interested in. My love for the application and inquiry of science has given me the impetus to challenge my students and to share my love for the unknown. My strongest points as an educator are my genuine interest in my students and relating real life situations to the study of science. I am very open to new ideas, new learning methods, and making science a part of everyday life. I have experience teaching at the college, high school and middle school level among students of various economic, social and cultural perspectives.

One of my favorite interests that students who I have mentored have come to embrace in their lives is the love for travel and integrating science education during our travels. I have brought students to various countries such as Nepal, Costa Rica and Mexico while integrating science with various other academic fields (sociology, Spanish and even mathematics) as a part of global citizenship and learning to be an all-around student. I believe that I am not only the mentor on the side but I can be that sounding board for my students to come into their own.

As a mentor and teacher, I always strive to provide a safe learning environment that will challenge students to become global citizens who carry with them a lifelong thirst for finding new questions, ideas and a love for learning. Through my own personal experience, I have always found that the most meaningful learning takes place when the teacher shares their enthusiasm and passion for the subject and students are given a voice in the learning process.

Elementary Classroom Teacher

Presently, I am a professional educator for a Grade 4 class in a rural environment; however, I have extensive experience teaching grades Kindergarten through 6th grade in both rural and urban environments. Having taught in California, USA for the extent of my teaching career, I am eager to meet the challenges and experiences that teaching and living abroad will provide.

My extensive educational background has provided me with the tools necessary to foster successful learning in all elementary ages. Further, my life and work experiences have reinforced my capacity to relate positively with people from various abilities, ethnic and social diversities, as well as ages. Applying my

background in the classroom has enhanced my commitment to show compassion and understanding and to listen and respond to the needs of students, parents, and administrators. Practical experience has also strengthened my belief in exemplary communication, a trait that is certainly of paramount importance not only in working with children, but also in the interactions with parents and colleagues.

You will find my classroom to be creative, student-based, dynamic, and organized. I utilize a variety of teaching methods and styles, depending on the needs of my students, incorporating whole group, cooperative, small group, and individual settings to cultivate and maintain a student-centered environment. My pupils have the opportunity to make choices within established boundaries as set forth by both students and myself.

Primary Classroom Teacher

I am a primary school teacher currently in my third year working as a qualified teacher in England. I will be attending the Council of International Schools recruitment fair in London from 10-13 May 2015. I have travelled and worked in several other countries including teaching English in a primary school in Mexico during 2013 – 2014 and undertaking a teaching placement in Spain during my teacher training during which I delivered lessons in Spanish.

I chose to become a teacher because teaching is a very rewarding profession where the results of your efforts can be seen on a daily basis. Although much can be demanded of teachers, I have a strong determination to consistently work to the best of my ability because the work done by teachers has a direct effect on the lives of others. The constant interaction between teacher and pupils in a classroom, through which both sides can learn and be challenged, is a unique aspect of teaching which I enjoy greatly.

During my first three years working as a teacher I have enjoyed the challenge of adapting and developing my teaching methods in order to continually improve the quality of pupils' learning. I try to use a variety of teaching methods with the aim of engaging all types of learners. I strive to ensure that each child in my class achieves the greatest academic success of which they are capable and I believe that taking into consideration the children's personal development helps contribute to this success. I aim to make each child in my class feel valued, to give the children confidence that they can each achieve something of value and

to encourage them to take responsibility for their learning.

Alternatively, combine your summary and philosophy:

Secondary English

I have taught English in the twelfth, tenth, eighth, and sixth grades. Teaching at multiple levels has given me a comprehensive view of the skills and knowledge that an adolescent needs to be successful. I am seeking a position teaching English at an American or an International Middle School where I can contribute my enthusiasm both inside the classroom and through extracurricular activities.

Before completing a Master of Education in 2006, I completed a college degree in Fine Arts. I feel my diverse background makes me uniquely qualified to contribute to the development of the whole student and the life of the whole school. Because of my experience as an art director, I would be capable of managing the school yearbook or newspaper. I am currently a dance coach, and have also led a team of students to the Virginia High School League State Debate Tournament. My earlier experiences as a competitive swimmer, tennis player, and cheerleader have shown me the importance of being a team player and maintaining a balanced lifestyle.

My educational philosophy centers on developing the whole student. To contribute to the educational, social, and moral needs of the student, I must be well-rounded myself. I strive to be serious while lighthearted, professional yet approachable. In this way, I hope to foster a comfortable, vibrant learning environment in which students can create and think critically.

Leadership

I think that a great leader leads by example. Creating a community of shared values is one of the most crucial jobs of a leader. A great leader initiates new ideas by building trust, resolving conflicts and providing support for others. Learning leaders facilitate group discussions, forge consensus and negotiate outcomes. A good leader implements decisions and meets goals but shares the credit. Goals play a key role in motivating people to honor their commitments so the school moves closer to fulfilling its fundamental purpose of learning for all students. This helps to foster integrity, honesty, fairness and respect.

A good leader makes reasonable and ethical decisions in response to complex problems. Teachers share the responsibility of leadership through teamwork and are collectively involved in curriculum planning, assessment and student learning. Team developed assessments, can turn data into information that can improve teaching and learning. The very essence of a professional learning community is a focus on and a commitment to the learning of each student. It is this collaborative interdependent work to achieve common goals that is the link to the purpose of learning.

My career in education continues to award me opportunities to work collaboratively with children and adults as a facilitator, mentor, teacher, and learning leader in a variety of cultures. It takes a collaborative team effort to create a positive, enthusiastic learning community that encourages risk-taking, and includes planned activities that promote optimal learning experiences; these are the keys to this success.

I have embraced the field of teaching and international education, as an opportunity to inspire and empower. As a learning leader, it is important to work collaboratively with other members of the learning community to incorporate goals of learning into a student-centered environment, where specific student goals, objectives and skills are the focus.

Science

Dynamic. This is the word I would use to describe my teaching career thus far. The last 11 years have been ever changing and full of effective action.

I began teaching earth science at Loveland High School and now find myself teaching as a reading interventionist and instructional coach at the middle school level. It is the experiences that are sandwiched between those 11 years that have created a diverse and fulfilling career.

Dynamic can also be used as a noun. It is a force that motivates and affects development. I find that this describes my approach to teaching. In every setting, it is my goal to affect positive growth and advance the development of the learner. Through rigor, relationships, and high expectations, I seek to empower students to excel in their academic life. I am a teacher of both content and process. Learners need to be aware of not just WHAT they are learning, but HOW and WHY they are learning it. The response to why a student is doing

something in my classroom should never be, “Cuz the teacher told me to!”

Personally, I find myself motivated to continue my learning about the world. My love for experiencing new cultures, countries, and building relationships with others from diverse backgrounds can be expressed in my desire to travel. I have been fortunate enough to visit 17 countries and feel energized with the anticipation of opening myself to different places and people.

Social Studies

I have taught High School and Middle School Social Studies for the past 8 years, the last two at an international school in Shanghai, China. I have taught Economics, American History, Civics, Leadership, and World History. I have also taught AP United States History and AP European History.

I have a B.A. in Government from Colby College. I earned my teaching license and later a Masters in Liberal Arts from the University of North Carolina at Asheville. That Summer I attended the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute at Colgate University on the Underground Railroad.

I am co-director of the Model United Nations Club and Chair of the Awards Committee. Furthermore, I have been a committee chair of the Curriculum Subcommittee, and a member of the School Improvement Team. I also served on the Academic Awards Committee and the Scholarship Committee. I have been the sponsor of the Debate Club, the Diplomacy Club, and a co-sponsor of the Improvisation Club. I also coached Women's Golf from 2012–2014.

In addition to my education experience, I am also a military veteran. Through my experiences, including a yearlong deployment to Baghdad, Iraq, I learned a lot about other cultures. I also developed an intense appreciation for an understanding of the world at large, and that is a key reason why I became a teacher.

Elementary Classroom

Over the last thirteen years I have gained a great deal of international teaching experience as an Early years and Lower Primary school teacher as well as an EAL Specialist in South Korea, Singapore and Brunei. My role for the present school year is working as the EAL specialist and Trainer, coordinating and

supporting English language skills, lessons and training throughout the school from Grade 1 to Grade 7.

I am currently looking to further expand and share my teaching skills and experiences in a more mentoring and/or teacher training role. I have developed several ESL workshops over the years for parents, teachers and assistants that provide information and teaching strategies that will support student learning in many different contexts.

Having worked in a British based school for the last nine years, I am well versed on the National Curriculum Strategies as well as the multiple intelligences approach found in the International Primary Curriculum. I have also worked with the Canadian Educational Curriculum as well as the Bruneian English Curriculum for English as a Foreign Language. My interests outside of school include visual art, and outdoor activities such as cycling.

High School Social Studies – History

I am a Canadian citizen and a dedicated teacher who has been employed in Western Australia for the last two and a half years. I hold a Graduate Diploma of Education in Society & Environment (Social Studies) attained in Australia, and a Bachelor of Arts in History: Military & Diplomatic Studies achieved in Canada.

Having lived and taught in a different country and a challenging locale, in addition to the travels I have experienced I am prepared for the adventures and challenges of teaching abroad. I have successfully taught students between the ages of 12-17 Society and Environment, English, Health and Physical Education.

I have experience in and passion for teaching senior school students Modern History in the following contexts: Nazi Germany, USA between the Wars, Australian History and the Cold War. My experience teaching in different learning areas has provided me with a broad range of skills and knowledge suited to international schools.

I have embraced the challenges of living in a location 1700 kilometres from the nearest city and I have emerged a more resilient person and proficient teacher. I have a reputation for being well organised, professional, enthusiastic, as well as having a sense of humour. I believe in creating a positive, student-centered classroom community that fosters independent thinking, values diversity and respect, and allows for active student involvement in meaningful study. I am

interested in relocating anywhere in the world to meet new people, challenge myself, and to encourage a new group of adolescents to become positive and contributing members of society.

Creative and energetic Educator dedicated to creating positive, student-centered learning experience that emphasizes problem-solving. Highly motivated teacher and school administrator with special talent in developing and implementing hands-on curriculum that reaches every student's learning style and ability, empowers students to succeed and realize their individual goals. Exceptional communicator and team member able to work collaboratively with staff and administration to achieve school success.

Areas of Expertise:



Business Studies



Social Studies



Curriculum Development



Classroom Technology

Teaching Philosophy, Samples



English

I strive to make humor a part of my classroom. In learning any language students may say things that are humorous without meaning to. If I can laugh at myself and we can laugh together, I can help to abolish the stigma that comes from making mistakes, especially comical ones. Those mistakes are necessary in learning to produce language creatively. Making students comfortable and encouraging them to speak the language as much as possible is the best practice for anyone to gain proficiency. I will do this by practicing the students native language with them formally or informally, thereby also increasing my rapport with the students.

Although there is a light hearted friendly atmosphere in my classroom, accountability is paramount. I treat students as equals. What is required of students will be clearly stated and the work is expected to be done. With expectations in place, I can accurately assess students work in a timely fashion and tweak lessons going forward to adjust for the needs of individuals in the class. By the same token I hold myself to the same high standard and encourage students to let me know when they need more from me.

When students are engaged, learning becomes a lifelong pursuit in and out of the classroom. I tailor my lessons to have applications beyond the classroom, giving students real world experiences as often as possible. Once students realize the power of what they learned in the classroom and its use in the real world their curiosity will have been piqued. Curiosity is the insatiable root holding any tree of knowledge firmly rooted and ever growing. Curiosity is piqued by any visceral connection to the material being taught and my passion and joy around language is noticeable in every lesson I teach. My students become happy, interested and engaged learners. This is the formula to getting students excited about learning language.

Early Years

I enjoy using an interdisciplinary, project-based approach while following traditional curriculum guidelines. I believe that students learn best through real-world experiences that are meaningful to them. It's important for students to develop a respect for themselves and everything else on Earth.

As a teacher, it is important to develop a strong connection between teachers, students, parents and community. It is important that each student build an understanding of how their life is relevant to his/her family, to the community, to the world, even the universe.

The students can begin to learn this by working in groups with each person playing an important role to the success of the group. This interconnectedness assists in the creation of an open minded child as well as learning to be internationally minded.

How can I help people to live in this world? This is my challenge as an educator. My answers to this challenge coalesced into my three Rs. Mine are respect, responsibility and relevance.

Respect. In my biology classes we work with fruit flies. When my students see how unique and complex the flies are they realize how much these little flies have in common with themselves. This respect for all life will enable my students to live in a diverse world.

Responsibility. Students need to understand that every choice has a consequence. My responsibility is to present the information in a way they can understand it, their responsibility is to learn the information. I often hear from past students that my class was one of the most challenging they have taken in high school, but also one in which I treated them with respect.

Relevance. What I teach must be relevant to my students' lives. Subjects lacking any connection are forgotten as quickly as they are learned. I constantly make associations between the subject of study and their world. Science constantly looks at how many different parts integrate in a complex system. Any way I can tie each student into a process that is greater than just themselves, gives them another way to see how their lives are relevant.

PYP Classroom

I motivate and encourage students not to give up. This I do by engaging them in learning activities that help them experience a sense of achievement while developing their knowledge, skills and attitudes. I also guide students to nurture positive behavior management skills which free them from controlled supervision. Consequently, this enables them to make decisions independently. I do believe in my students.

As a teacher with 13 years of experience, 6 of which have been as a PYP teacher, I have gained considerable experience in the inquiry approach to teaching and learning. I am adaptable to new settings and happy to work with a variety of people. I believe that learning is a lifelong adventure and it is important to keep our minds open to knowledge and our hearts open to love.

I am educator who is passionate about my students' growth in all aspects of their development. I believe that, given the opportunity every child can attain their highest potential. My goal therefore as their teacher is to guide them and help them to attain that level. Children will thrive in a warm and trusting environment and one of my primary roles is to ensure a classroom/learning environment that will be a safe arena for them to exercise freedom to explore, wonder, and to create and share their knowledge.

Below are some brief words of recommendation from my referees.

Secondary English

My core philosophy is to provide multiple opportunities, from lessons to assessments, for students to develop skills necessary for proficiency in English. True language acquisition is more than memorizing vocabulary and verb conjugations; it is being able to demonstrate successful usage of L2 in a variety of ways. While multiple-choice tests measure basic knowledge, genuine ability to communicate must be evaluated differently.

To prepare for true assessment, students need authentic practice based on meaningful interactions to achieve language proficiency. In order to provide realistic connections to varied topics, I learn about my students' interests through individual and group instructional conferences and incorporate these into the

curriculum. By aligning requirements with popular literature, music, and other academic subjects, students take a personal interest in their own education.

Meeting with students yields knowledge of the individual that often goes unnoticed in full classrooms. Being familiar with much of the current literature, I have had multiple successes in matching reluctant readers with books or authors. The excitement students share when they have completed an advanced-level book for the first time is inspiring.

When discussing writing, I often hear wonderful narratives spoken aloud by students and the difficulties they encounter when attempting to write their stories out by hand. I respond by asking them to “talk to the paper.” We read our developing stories out loud to catch those “silly” English errors on our drafts. In acknowledging faults with a sense of humor, students become bolder in trying new skills as the fear of making mistakes diminishes. When each paper is finished, and the words are read back to the writer, students are surprised with the quality of their completed work.

English, like any other language is not exact and is constantly evolving. I use the word “Google” as an example of the way words change both in context and in meaning. We discuss how a word in one culture means something quite different in another, and how words migrate between languages.

When students are inspired by these discussions to learn about language outside of the classroom, I feel successful as a teacher.

Secondary Science

Experience is not what happens to a man: it is what a man does with what happens to him. — Aldous Huxley

The ability to provide students with the opportunity to discover the world around them is the greatest gift.

My teaching experience began in the fall of 2008 when I first taught an Anatomy Lab at San Francisco State University. The variety of students ranged from Pre-Med, Nursing, Biology, Dietitians and Kinesiology students. I incorporated inquiry-based learning in a traditional Science course at the university level. This helped the students to engage with the subject matter by using their own life experiences.

I continued this course of teaching in 2014 at the middle and high school level at various overseas schools. This was more challenging as students at this level need more guidance than university students. I used their feedback as a tool to gauge what worked in their understanding of the material. Using everyday items to activate their curiosity allowed them to gain interest in the activity and in turn gave them opportunity to ask questions that would help them find the answers on their own.

I strongly encouraged student participation by interacting with various students (especially the shy quiet ones). If the students avoided asking questions, I made a conscious effort to ask questions to search for their understanding and make adjustments to my teaching pace appropriately. This is what I did to improve student learning:

1. Started after school and early morning tutoring
2. Designed Inquiry-based learning experiments that required students to research the information before executing the experiment (Hands on experience).
3. Used ESL Science Books, the Internet resources relating to Science- for better student understanding
4. Had students organize their Science binders that they brought with them to parent-teacher conferences to show the progress of completed or incomplete work.
5. Had students keep a Science journal about their experience while performing experiments.
6. Used real life examples to show them how Science works in everyday life.
7. Used their own questions about Science to perform experiments.
8. Worked with other Science teachers (Chemistry) to show them how other Sciences are connected to each other
9. Used their city as an example of how to improve their own environment.
10. Introduced many different ways to use the scientific method (real life situation-Lock down to Science experiments).
11. I set high standards for the students. I want them to succeed!

I believe each course subject I taught (Anatomy at the University level, 7th grade Biology, 8th grade Physics and 9th grade Chemistry) was prepared in a clear and fascinating manner, in which the students achievement of the new concepts during class time only broadened them in different learning settings.

Interview Questions

Personal Views and Background

Why do you want to teach?

Do you plan to make teaching a career?

What do you hope to gain by pursuing a teaching career?

What gives you the most satisfaction as a teacher?

Use a summary of your teaching philosophy to answer. Give an example or two of the activities that you enjoy.

Why are you leaving your current job?

Prepare to answer this question unless you are right out of college. Your answer should send a clear message that there have been no real problems in your past employment.

You are looking for work abroad to expand your professional and cultural horizons. It's time for you to move on, to try to do something different. Say a few nice words about your current employer. Stress that you have gotten along well with the faculty and administration. If you were laid off say so. You don't need to apologize for it — this is not your fault.

Explain the situation and add a few words about the new ideas you've been exploring, books you've read, and courses you've taken to keep up with the career objectives. Use the same approach if there is a big gap in your work history.

If you were fired, you have to acknowledge the mistake you made. Don't come up with excuses to maintain your innocence, it never looks good to a director.

Instead, focus on the lessons you have learned to shift the subject to a positive track. Provide examples.

Killer mistake: degrade your fellow teachers and criticize the school administration.

Why do you want to teach in this country/school?

Don't say anything stupid, this is only a test to determine if you have unrealistic expectations or some weird ideas.

Your answer must be simple. Refer to your prior work/teaching/travel experience and/or study. ("I have studied Spanish for a three years and the idea of teaching in a Spanish-speaking country has always been exciting to me.")

What are the most important characteristics of a successful teacher?

If you can, describe a good teacher that you know personally and how you use his/her knowledge or methods in your teaching practice. Don't theorize.

What characteristics separate the above-average teacher from the average teacher?

Same as above.

What do you expect of your students?

This question is not about the ideal students that you'd like to have. The director wants to know if your expectations are realistic. Indicate that you are prepared for challenges. Give an example of problem solving in the classroom.

What are the most important contributions you can make to your students?

Use your teaching philosophy as a basis. Don't try to come up with something extraordinary. Mention your strongest points. Give an example how you did it in the past. Reveal the treasures of your portfolio.

Do you accept the responsibility of being a good example?

It's not enough to simply say yes. Give an example where you provided a good example. If you have a letter/recommendation in your teaching portfolio, use it!

What can you contribute to the success of our school?

Describe your best assets. Illustrate your answer with an example from your teaching portfolio.

What can you contribute to the profession?

Same as above.

Tell me about your personal background.

Don't waste your time on irrelevant information. Recite your elevator speech. Emphasize your strong points. If you are looking for work as a teaching couple, indicate it immediately. Talk about your foreign work/ travel experience. Be positive and enthusiastic.

What are your hobbies and interests?

This is an important question so be alert! Many directors ask this question to determine if you are a solitary type or the kind of person who prefers to interact with others.

If you prefer to relax with a book in the solitude of your room, don't mention it. The best jobs go to those who are involved with other people. If you can, talk about your people-oriented activities. For example, do not say that you like reading. Talk about how you organized a book club or participated in a book exchange program.

Avoid controversial subjects such as politics and religion.

What are your professional plans or goals?

Use your teaching philosophy as a basis for your answer. Indicate your commitment to overseas teaching.

What is your philosophy of education?

You have to know your philosophy of education very well, this question is most likely to be asked in some form. It's part of your application, so be prepared to reiterate it in different ways.

How do you rank values, facts, and concepts in importance?

Again, use your philosophy of education. In this particular case you can use an example as an illustration. Use your portfolio if possible.

What are your strongest traits?

How competent are you?

What do you have to offer that no other candidate has?

Why do you think you will be a successful teacher?

Based on your student teaching or previous teaching experience, how do you evaluate yourself as a teacher?

Look at these questions as an opportunity to market yourself. What the director actually means is, *“Show me what you can do! Convince me!”* Translate these questions as *“Give me a presentation of yourself.”*

You are running the show now. Do not disappoint his expectations! Give your best examples and show your confidence.

You don't have to start answering in an official manner, “My strongest traits are: five years of teaching experience overseas, ability to adjust to a new culture, good teaching and communication skills.” It’s boring.

You may mention some event or experience as a starting point, *“When I first began to teach, five years ago, I thought that my professional preparation was my most important quality. However, in the past five years I have discovered so much more! What I now value most is my patience with my students and my motivational methods. Here's what my principal has to say about it...”*

Another example: *“I have always wanted to teach. I had amazing teachers in high school and I will forever remember them. As a teacher, I want to inspire, guide and encourage my students. I teach by doing — this is my deep belief...”*

What are your weakest traits?

A very rare question. There are different strategies to answer questions about your weaknesses. The interviewer may want to see how well you handle this question. He may also want to find out how you evaluate yourself.

You can name a minor weakness that can be improved easily. Mention some technical skills such as slow typing. Don't say anything about your personality here, intuitive skills are hard to acquire and any lack of them should not be mentioned here.

However, you can mention a trait that you have dealt with successfully, like, “I used to be very impatient with the students’ progress. But I developed a system that allows the students to be more flexible. Would you like to know how it works?” Give a brief example. Etc., etc.

Some people name “weaknesses” that they consider strengths in order to impress the interviewer. “I am a workaholic!” It may work in a corporate interview but it

sounds cheesy for a teacher.

What is your attitude toward extra-duty activities?

You must project a positive attitude to make a good impression. Overseas schools are limited in their extra-curricular options and every director is looking for teachers for whom extra work is not a chore. The span of additional responsibilities can be very big.

The key word here is flexibility. You must be ready to become Jack-of-all-trades if the situation demands it. Extra-curricular classes are often a required part of your contract. Your school is a small island in a foreign ocean and its success depends on its ability to be self-sufficient. Provide examples of your extra-duty work. Anything counts.

What do you know about our school/country?

Some basic knowledge will impress the interviewer who is used to meeting people without a clue.

It is also a good opportunity to ask your questions about the school and the country. *"I hear it's illegal for women to drive in the Middle East, how do you handle this?"*

Can you be happy living in this country?

Don't rush to say, *"Oh, no problemo!"* This would be immature because nobody knows the answer. Indicate your familiarity with the problems that moving overseas can create.

Emphasize your prior foreign experience if you have any. Mention the details that help you deal with the new challenges such as your knowledge of the language, your travel experience, friends and so on. Stress your adjustment skills and motivation to succeed.

Communicative and People Skills

Do you get along well with most people?

What quality in other people is most important to you?

Can you get along with other faculty members?

What do you believe your role and obligations should be toward other faculty members?

The relative isolation of international school communities requires mature communication and people skills. The interviewer is concerned if you might pose a potential threat to the stability of the school environment. Almost every director can tell a story of how a small personal conflict developed into a big problem. Certain types of people can be destructive so be ready to prepare a good response to fend off the director's suspicions. Whatever you say remember that your answer should contain a clear message that you are not the kind of person who is likely to start a conflict with another faculty member over petty things.

The best way to deal with these questions is to show the interviewer letters of recommendation and other testimonials underlying your communicative skills and good personality.

What are your attitudes toward school administration?

Overseas schools recruiters like independent people who can solve problems on their own. However, you must not portray yourself as an independent entrepreneur.

Say that your priority is to fully understand the school's policies, practices and culture and you would appreciate any help at this point. Indicate that you are prepared to deal with challenges on your own. Prove it with an example from your experience. The director will be delighted.

What techniques do you use in developing rapport with students? Be specific but do not go too much into detail. The interviewer simply wants to make sure that you have the right skills.

What evidence can you provide that you can establish a good working relationship with students? This will be only asked if you have come empty-handed. Use your teaching portfolio, references, and letters of recommendation. An initial job interview is going to be about 30 minutes. It is often followed by a second session that can be 30 minutes to an hour.

MORE QUESTIONS

The following questions are teacher-specific and there are no right or wrong answers, this is a matter of personal opinion. The purpose of these questions is merely to test your professional knowledge and gather information on your professional background.

Do not bore the interviewer with long answers unless she shows a particular interest in the subject that you know very well. Avoid controversial techniques and experiences.

If possible, talk about your individual findings and other methods that have worked well for you in the past. Individualize your responses with examples but don't try to look eccentric. Remember that only a few questions will be asked.

Teaching Skills

- What can you do to improve learning opportunities in your area?
- Describe the role of the teacher in the learning process.
- How do you handle curricular content in classes of students with different levels of ability?
- Are you prepared to individualize instruction?
- How would you individualize instruction in your classroom?
- What do you consider to be the most worthwhile innovations in your particular area?
- What do you consider to be the ideal learning environment?
- What are the ingredients of an effective learning program?
- What teaching techniques are effective for you?
- What are the major problems that you have faced in the classroom?
- What are the objectives that you hope to achieve in your area?
- How would you organize and what would you include in a unit lesson plan?
- How do you expect to motivate students?

Education and Experience

- What subjects are you qualified and/or certified to teach?
- Why did you choose your particular area of preparation?
- What were the greatest highlights of your college career?
- Name and evaluate two professional books that you have read within the last six months.

Do not mention anything that you do not know even if the director is pressing you. *“What, you didn't read this book after all the publicity it received? It's the one that's mentioned in your resume as the subject of your thesis!”* You may be pressed to say, “Um, yes, actually I read parts of it...” Don't do that. Stick to your original statement.

- What kinds of experiences have you had which will be of help when you begin teaching?
- What out-of-school experiences have you had working with children?
- What kinds of work experience have you had other than teaching?
- Tell me about your student teaching or previous teaching experience.
- Were you successful in your student teaching or previous teaching experience?

Classroom Control

Discipline questions can be tricky. When parents, students and teachers come from different cultural backgrounds, classroom control is often a disputed territory. Essentially, it will all depend on the kind of school it is. For example, in most Asian countries, students are expected to work hard, rather than be entertained. Candidates who focus on “having fun” are not perceived as professional.

Don't use theory. State your basic principles and proceed to examples. This is a very practical group of questions.

Emphasize your successful experience in dealing with classroom control. Use every possible piece of evidence such as testimonials and teaching portfolio samples.

—What is your philosophy of discipline?

—How would you handle discipline problems?

—Can you maintain good classroom discipline?

—Do you anticipate any difficulty in classroom control?

—How successful have you been in your previous experience in maintaining good discipline?

—What procedures work best for you in maintaining discipline?

—What type of classroom atmosphere would you establish to prevent discipline problems?

Questions to Ask the Director

When candidates ask no questions it is not a good sign to the recruiter. Always be ready to ask a few questions, usually along the interview lines - so that your communication with the interviewer is smooth and coherent.

Questions beyond the context of the interview are acceptable when the recruiter asks if you have any questions. As well as at the end of the interview. Otherwise, go with the flow of your conversation.

Typically, these issues are addressed during the interview so there is no need to ask all these questions. However, if you feel like you do not understand something – go ahead and ask!

1. The exact length of the contract – when does it begin and end?

2. Is the contract renewable?

3. Are there any extra-curricular responsibilities? If yes, what are they?

4. How often are the staff meetings and what other functions do you have to attend?

5. Will you have your own classroom or will you have to share it?
6. Will you have to teach at various locations? If yes, who pays for transportation?
7. What kind of students will you have? Age? Education level? Nationality?
8. Are there enough teaching supplies?
9. Who is in charge of the discipline problems?
10. What is the school policy on discipline?
11. Are there any bonuses at the end of the contract?
12. What is the savings potential?
13. Are there legal restrictions on the amount of money you can send home?
14. Is housing provided? Is it shared? If yes, do you get a separate room?
15. What is included? (Utilities, telephone, furniture, TV, AC, appliances, etc.)
16. If not, does the school assist with finding housing?
17. How much is the typical rent? What are the other costs (agent fees, security deposit, etc.)?
18. Is health insurance included? If yes, what is the health-service provider? When does the coverage begin?
19. What paid holidays do you get? How many?
20. Do you get any paid vacation time? How much?
21. Are any sick/personal days allowed?
22. Who pays for your air tickets? If you must pay for your airfare, is any portion of it going to be reimbursed?
23. Does the school pay for extra baggage?
24. Does the school pay for a return flight?
25. In which currency are you going to be paid?

26. Are you paid in cash or by a direct bank deposit?
27. Is any money held back?
28. What is the payment schedule?
29. How much tax is withheld? Is any portion of it returned upon completion of contract?
30. What are penalties for breaking the contract?
31. What is the English language ability of the students?
32. What holidays does the school observe?
33. Am I going to have an Aide?
34. What specific audio-visual equipment is available?
35. What procedure is used to report student progress to parents?
36. Are there special teachers for art, music, physical education, or special education?
37. What procedures are used in evaluating new and career teachers?
38. Does the school have a policy on discipline?
39. What is the organizational structure of your school?
40. What is the average class size within the school?
41. What is the duration of the expected workday for the classroom teacher?
42. What extra assignments are expected of me?
43. To what extent will I be expected to participate in PTO meetings?